INTRODUCTION

TO THE

LITERATURE OF EUROPE

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CHAP. V.

HISTORY OF POETRY FROM 1600 TO 1650.

CHAP. VI.

HISTORY OF DRAMATIC LITERATURE FROM 1600 TO 1650.

CHAP. VII.

HISTORY OF POLITE LITERATURE IN PROSE FROM 1600 TO 1650.



INTRODUCTION

TO THE

LITERATURE OF EUROPE

IN THE FIFTEENTH, SIXTEENTH, AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES.

CHAPTER I.

HISTORY OF ANCIENT LITERATURE IN EUROPE, FROM 1600 TO 1650.

SECT. I.

Decline of merely philological, especially Greek, Learning — Casaubon — Viger — Editions of Greek and Latin Classics — Critical Writings — Latin Style — Scioppius — Vossius — Successive Periods of modern Latinists.

CHAP. I.

Learning of 17th century less philological.

1. IN every period of literary history, if we should listen to the complaints of contemporary writers, all learning and science have been verging towards extinction. None remain of the mighty, the race of giants is no more; the lights that have been extinguished burn in no other hands; we have fallen on evil days, when letters are no longer

CHAP. I. in honour with the world, nor are they cultivated by those who deserve to be honoured. Such are the lamentations of many throughout the whole sixteenth century; and with such do Scaliger and Casaubon greet that which opened upon them. Yet the first part of the seventeenth century may be reckoned eminently the learned age; rather however in a more critical and exact erudition with respect to historical fact, than in what is strictly called philology, as to which we cannot, on the whole, rank this so high as the preceding period. Neither Italy nor Germany maintained its reputation, which, as it has been already mentioned, had begun to wane towards the close of the sixteenth century. The same causes were at work, the same preference of studies very foreign to polite letters, metaphysical philosophy, dogmatic theology, patristic or mediæval ecclesiastical history, or, in some countries, the physical sciences, which were rapidly gaining ground. And to these we must add a prevalence of bad taste, even among those who had some pretensions to be reckoned scholars. Lipsius had set an example of abandoning the purest models; and his followers had less sense and taste than himself. They sought obsolete terms from Pacuvius and Plautus, they affected pointed sentences, and a studied conciseness of period, which made their style altogether dry and jejune.* The universities, and even the gymnasia or schools of Germany, grew negligent of all the beauties of language. Latin itself was acquired in a slovenly manner, by help of modern

* Biogr. Univ. art. Grævius. Eichhorn, iii. 1. 320.

CHAP. I.

books, which spared the pains of acquiring any subsidiary knowledge of antiquity. And this neglect of the ancient writers in education caused even eminent scholars to write ill, as we perceive in the supplements of Freinshemius to Curtius and Livy.*

Popularity of Comenius.

2. A sufficient evidence of this is found in the vast popularity which the writings of Comenius acquired in Germany. This author, a man of much industry, some ingenuity, and little judgment, made himself a colossal reputation by his Orbis Sensualium Pictus, and still more by his Janua Linguarum Reserata, the latter published in 1631. This contains, in 100 chapters subdivided into 1000 paragraphs, more than 9300 Latin words, exclusive, of course, of such as recur. The originality of its method consists in weaving all useful words into a series of paragraphs, so that they may be learned in a short time, without the tediousness of a nomenclature. It was also intended to blend a knowledge of things with one of words.† The Orbis Sensualium Pictus has the same end. This is what has since been so continually attempted in books of education, that some may be surprised to hear of its originality. No one, however, before Comenius seems to have thought of this method. It must, unquestionably, have appeared to facilitate the early acquirement of knowledge in a very great degree; and even with reference to language, if a compendious mode of getting at Latin words were the object, the works of Comenius would answer the purpose beyond those of any classical author. In a country where Latin was a living and spoken

* Eichhorn, 326. † Biogr. Univ.

CHAP. I.

tongue, as was in some measure the case with Germany, no great strictness in excluding barbarous phrases is either practicable or expedient. But, according to the received principles of philological literature, they are such books as every teacher would keep out of the hands of his pupils. They were, nevertheless, reprinted and translated in many countries; and obtained a general reception, especially in the German empire, and similarly circumstanced kingdoms.*

Decline of Greek learning.

3. The Greek language, meantime, was thought unnecessary, and few, comparatively speaking, continued to prosecute its study. In Italy it can merely be said, that there were still professors of it in the universities; but no one Hellenist distinguishes this century. Most of those who published editions of Greek authors in Germany, and they were far from numerous, had been formed in the last age. The decline was progressive; few scholars remained after 1620, and a long blank ensued, until Fabricius and Kuster restored the study of Greek near the end of the century. Even in France and Holland, where many were abun-

* Baillet, Critiques Grammairiens, part of the Jugemens des Sçavans, (whom I cite by the number or paragraph, on account of the different editions,) No. 634., quotes Lancelot's remark on the Janua Linguarum, that it requires a better memory than most boys possess to master it, and that commonly the first part is forgotten before the last is learned. It excites disgust in the scholar, because he is always in a new country, every chapter being filled with words he has not seen before; and the successive parts of the book have no connexion with one another.

Morhof, though he would absolutely banish the Janua Linguarum from all schools where good Latinity is required, seems to think rather better of the Orbis Sensualium Pictus, as in itself a happy idea, though the delineations are indifferent, and the whole not so well arranged as it might be. Polyhistor. lib. ii. c. 4.



dantly learned, and some, as we shall see, accomplished philologers, the Greek language seems to have been either less regarded, or at least less promoted by eminent scholars, than in the preceding century. *

Casaubon.

4. Casaubon now stood on the pinnacle of critical renown. His Persius in 1605, and his Polybius in 1609, were testimonies to his continued industry in this province. † But with this latter edition the philological labours of Casaubon came to an end. In 1610 he accepted the invitation of James I., who bestowed upon him, though a layman, a prebend in the church of Canterbury, and, as some, perhaps erroneously, have said, another in that of Westminster. ‡ He died in England within four years after, having consumed the intermediate time in the defence of his royal patron against the Jesuits, and in writing Animadversions on the Annals of Baronius; works ill-suited to his peculiar talent, and in the latter of which he is said to have had but little success. He laments, in his epistles,

* Scaliger, even in 1602, says: Quis hodie nescit Græcè? sed quis est doctus Græcè? Non dubito esse aliquot, sed paucos, et quos non novi ne de nomine quidem. Te unum novi et memoriæ avorum et nostri sæculi Græcè doctissimum, qui unus in Græcis præstiteris, quæ post renatas apud nos bonas literas omnes nunquam præstare potuissent. He goes on to speak of himself, as standing next to Casaubon, and the only competent judge of the extent of his learning; qui de præstantia doctrinæ tuæ certo judicare possit, ego aut unicus sum, aut qui cæteros hac in re magno intervallo vinco. Scal. Epist. 72.

† The translation that Casaubon has here given of Polybius has generally passed for excellent, though some have thought him a better scholar in Greek than in Latin, and consequently not always able to render the sense as well as he conceived it. Baillet, n. 902. Schweighauser praises the annotations, but not without the criticism for which a later editor generally finds room in an earlier. Reiske, he says, had pointed out many errors.

‡ The latter is contradicted by Beloe, Anecdotes of Literature, vol. v. p. 126., on the authority of Le Neve's Fasti Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ.

CHAP. I.

the want of leisure for completing his labours on Polybius; the king had no taste but for theology, and he found no library in which he could pursue his studies.* "I gave up," he says, "at last, with great sorrow, my commentary on Polybius, to which I had devoted so much time, but the good king must be obeyed."† Casaubon was the last of the great scholars of the sixteenth century. Joseph Scaliger, who, especially in his recorded conversation, was very sparing of praise, says expressly, "Casaubon is the most learned man now living." It is not impossible that he meant to except himself; which would by no means be unjust, if we take in the whole range of erudition; but in the exactly critical knowledge of the Greek language, Casaubon had not even a rival in Scaliger.

Viger de Idiotismis:

5. A long period ensued, during which no very considerable progress was made in Greek literature. Few books occur before the year 1650 which have obtained a durable reputation. The best known, and, as I conceive, by far the best of a grammatical nature, is that of Viger de Idiotismis præcipuis

* Jacent curæ Polybianæ, et fortasse æternum jacebunt, neque enim satis commodus ad illa studia est locus. Epist. 705. Plura adderem, nisi omni librorum præsidio meorum deficerer. Quare etiam de commentariis Polybianis noli meminisse, quando rationes priorum meorum studiorum hoc iter mirificè conturbavit, ut vix sine suspirio ejus incepti possim meminisse, quod tot vigiliis mihi constitit. Sed neque adest mea bibliotheca, neque ea studia multum sunt ad gustum illius, cujus solius, quamdiu hic sum futurus, habenda mihi ratio. Ep. 704. (Feb. 1611.) Rex optimus atque ευσεβέστατος rebus theologicis ita delectatur, ut aliis curis literariis non multum operæ impendat. Ep. 872. Ego quid hic agam, si cupis scire, hoc unum respondebo, omnia priora studia mea funditus interiisse. Nam maximus rex et liberalissimus unico genere literarum sic capitur, ut suum et suorum ingenia in illo detineat. Ep. 753.

† Decessi gemens a Polybiano commentario, quem tot laboribus concinnaveram; sed regi optimo parendum erat. Ep. 854. Feb. 1613.

Græcæ Linguæ, which Hoogeveen and Zeunius successively enlarged in the last century. Viger was a Jesuit of Rouen, and the first edition was in 1632. It contains, even as it came from the author, many valuable criticisms, and its usefulness to a Greek scholar is acknowledged. But, in order to determine the place of Viger among grammarians, we should ascertain by comparison with preceding works, especially the Thesaurus of Stephens, for how much he is indebted to their labours. He would probably, after all deductions, appear to merit great praise. His arrangement is more clear, and his knowledge of syntax more comprehensive, than that of Caninius or any other earlier writer; but his notions are not unfrequently imperfect or erroneous, as the succeeding editors have pointed out. In common with many of the older grammarians, he fancied a difference of sense between the two aorists, wherein even Zeunius has followed him.*

Weller's Greek grammar.

6. In a much lower rank, we may perhaps next place Weller, author of a Greek grammar, published in 1638, of which its later editor, Fischer, says that it has always stood in high repute as a school-book, and been frequently reprinted; meaning, doubtless, in Germany. There is nothing striking in Weller's grammar; it may deserve praise for clearness and brevity; but, in Vergara, Caninius,

* An earlier treatise on Greek particles by Devarius, a Greek of the Ionian Islands, might have been mentioned in the last volume. It was republished by Reusmann, who calls Devarius, homo olim haud ignobilis, at hodie pæne neglectus. He is thought too subtle in grammar, but seems to have been an excellent scholar. I do not perceive that Viger has borrowed from him.

CHAP. I.

and Sylburgius, there is much more instruction for those who are not merely schoolboys, What is most remarkable is, that Weller claims as his own the reduction of the declensions to three, and of the conjugations to one; which, as has been seen in our second volume*, is found in the grammar of Sylburgius, and is probably due to Ramus. This is rather a piece of effrontery, as he could scarcely have lighted by coincidence on both these innovations. Weller has given no syntax; what is added in Fischer's edition is by Lambert Bos.

Labbe and others.

7. Philip Labbe, a French Jesuit, was a laborious compiler, among whose numerous works not a few relate to the grammar of the Greek language. He had, says Niceron, a wonderful talent in multiplying titlepages; we have fifteen or sixteen grammatical treatises from him, which might have been comprised in two or three ordinary volumes. Labbe's Regulæ Accentuum, published in 1635, was once, I believe, of some repute; but he has little or nothing of his own.† The Greek grammars published in this age by Alexander Scot and others are ill-digested, according to Lancelot, without order or principle, and full of useless and perplexing things‡: and that of Vossius, in 1642, which is only an improved edition of that of Clenardus, appears to contain little which is not taken from others.§ Erasmus Schmidt is said by Eichhorn to be author of a valuable work on Greek dialects‖; George Pasor is better known by his writings on

* Page 24.

† Niceron, vol. xxv.

‡ Baillet, n. 706.

§ Id. n. 711.

‖ Geschichte der Cultur, iii. 325.

Salmasius de Lingua Hellenistica

the Hellenistic dialect, or that of the Septuagint and New Testament. Salmasius, in his Commentarius de Hellenistica, (Leyden, 1643) has gone very largely into this subject. This, he says, is a question lately agitated, whether there be a peculiar dialect of the Greek Scriptures; for, in the last age, the very name of Hellenistic was unknown to scholars. It is not above half a century old. It was supposed to be a Hebrew idiom in Greek words; which, as he argues elaborately and with great learning, is not sufficient to constitute a distinct dialect, none of the ancients having ever mentioned one by this name. This is evidently much of a verbal dispute; since no one would apply the word to the scriptural Greek, in the same sense that he does to the Doric and Attic. Salmasius lays down two essential characteristics of a dialect: one, that it should be spoken by people differing in locality; another, that it should be distinguishable by single words, not merely by idiom. A profusion of learning is scattered all round, but not pedantically or impertinently; and this seems a very useful book in Greek or Latin philology. He may perhaps be thought to underrate the peculiarities of language in the Old and New Testament, as if they were merely such as passed current among the contemporary Greeks. The second part of this Commentary relates to the Greek dialects generally, without reference to the Hellenistic. He denies the name to what is usually called the common dialect, spoken, or at least written, by the Greeks in general after the time of Alexander. This also is of course a question

CHAP. I.

of words; perhaps Salmasius used a more convenient phraseology than what is often met with in grammarians.

Greek editions — Savile's Chrysostom.

8. Editions of Greek classics are not so numerous as in the former period. The Pindar of Erasmus Schmidt, in 1614, and the Aristotle of Duval, in 1619, may be mentioned: the latter is still in request, as a convenient and complete edition. Meursius was reckoned a good critical scholar, but his works as an editor are not very important. The chief monument of his philological erudition is the Lexicon Græco-Barbarum, a glossary of the Greek of the lower empire. But no edition of a Greek author published in the first part of the seventeenth century is superior, at least in magnificence, to that of Chrysostom by Sir Henry Savile. This came forth, in 1612, from a press established at Eton by himself, provost of that college. He had procured types and pressmen in Holland, and three years had been employed in printing the eight volumes of this great work; one, which both in splendour of execution, and in the erudition displayed in it by Savile, who had collected several manuscripts of Chrysostom, leaves immeasurably behind it every earlier production of the English press. The expense, which is said to have been eight thousand pounds, was wholly defrayed by himself, and the tardy sale of so voluminous a work could not have reimbursed the cost. * Another

* Beloe's Anecdotes of Literature, vol. v. p. 103. The copies sold for 9l. each; a sum equal to nearly 30l. at present, and from the relative wealth of the country, to considerably more. What wonder that the sale was slow? Fuller however tells us, that when he wrote, almost half a century afterwards, the book was become scarce.

edition, in fact, by a Jesuit, Fronto Ducæus (Fronton le Duc), was published at Paris within two years afterwards, having the advantage of a Latin translation, which Savile had imprudently waved. It has even been imputed to Ducæus, that, having procured the sheets of Savile's edition from the pressmen while it was under their hands, he printed his own without alteration. But this seems an apocryphal story.* Savile had the assistance, in revising the text, of the most learned co-adjutors he could find in England.

Greek learning in England.

9. A very few more Greek books were printed at Eton soon afterwards; and though that press soon ceased, some editions of Greek authors, generally for schools, appeared in England before 1650. One of these, the Poetæ Minores of Winterton, is best known, and has sometimes been reprinted; it does little credit to its original editor, the text being exceedingly corrupt, and the notes very trifling. The Greek language however was now

Chrysostomus, says Casaubon, a Savilio editur privata impensa, animo regio. Ep. 738. (apud Beloe.) The principal assistants of Savile were, Matthew Bust, Thomas Allen, and especially Richard Montagu, afterwards celebrated in our ecclesiastical history as bishop of Chichester, who is said to have corrected the text before it went to the press. As this is the first work of learning, on a great scale, published in England, it deserves the particular commemoration of those to whom we owe it.

* It is told by Fuller, and I do not know that it has any independent confirmation. Savile himself says of Fronto Ducæus, "Vir doctissimus, et cui Chrysostomus noster plurimum debet." Fuller, it may be observed, says, that the Parisian edition followed Savile's "in a few months," whereas the time was two years; and as Brunet (Manuel du Libraire) justly observes, there is no apparent necessity to suppose an unfair communication of the sheets, even if the text should be proved to be copied

CHAP. I.

much studied *; the age of James and Charles was truly learned; our writers are prodigal of an abundant erudition, which embraces a far wider range of authors than are now read; the philosophers of every class, the poets, the historians and orators of Greece, to whom few comparatively had paid regard in the days of Elizabeth, seem as familiar to the miscellaneous writers of her next successors, as the fathers of the church are to the theologians. A few, like Jeremy Taylor, are equally copious in their libations from both streams. But though thus deeply read in ancient learning, our old scholars were not very critical in philology.

Latin editions — Torrentius.

10. In Latin criticism, the pretensions of the seventeenth century are far more considerable than in Greek. The first remarkable edition, however, that of Horace by Torrentius, a Belgian ecclesiastic, though it appeared in 1602, being posthumous, belongs strictly to the preceeding age. It has been said that Dacier borrowed much for his own notes from this editor; but Horace was so pro-

* It might appear, at first sight, that Casaubon intended to send his son Meric to Holland, under the care of Heinsius, because he could not get a good classical education in England. Cupio in Græcis, Latinis, et Hebraicis literis ipsum serio exerceri. Hoc in Anglia posse fieri sperare non possumus; nam hic locupletissima sunt collegia, sed quorum ratio toto genere diversa est ab institutis omnium aliorum collegiorum. Ep. 962. (1614). But possibly he meant that, on account of his son's foreign birth, he could not be admitted on the foundation of English colleges, though the words do not clearly express this. At the king's command, however, Meric was sent to Oxford. One of Casaubon's sons went to Eton school; literis dat operam in gymnasio Etoniensi. Ep. 737. (apud Beloe's Anecdotes; I had overlooked the passage.) Theological learning, in the reign of James, opposed polite letters and philology. Est in Anglia, says Casaubon, theologorum ingens copia; eo enim fere omnes studia sua referunt. Ep. 762. Venio ex Anglia (Grotius writes in 1613), literarum ibi tenuis est merces; theologi regnant, leguleii rem faciunt; unus ferme Casaubonus habet fortunam satis faventem, sed, ut ipse judicat, minus certam. Ne huic quidem locus fuisset in Anglia ut literatori, theologum induere debuit. Epist. Grot. p. 751.

fusely illustrated in the sixteenth century, that little has been left for later critics, except to tamper, as they have largely done, with his text. This period is not generally conspicuous for editions of Latin authors; but some names of high repute in grammatical and critical lore belong to it.

Gruter.

11. Gruter, a native of Antwerp, who became a professor in several German universities, and finally in that of Heidelberg, might have been mentioned in our history of the sixteenth century, before the expiration of which some of his critical labours had been accomplished. Many more belong to the first twenty years of the present. No more diligent and indefatigable critic ever toiled in that quarry. His Suspiciones, an early work, in which he has explained and amended miscellaneous passages, his annotations on the Senecas, on Martial, on Statius, on the Roman historians, as well as another more celebrated compilation which we shall have soon to mention, bear witness to his immense industry. In Greek he did comparatively but little; yet he is counted among good scholars in that language. All others of his time, it has been said, appear mere drones in comparison with him.* Scaliger indeed, though on intimate terms with Gruter, in one of his usual fits of spleen, charges him with a tasteless indifference to the real merit of the writers whom he explained, one being as good as another for his purpose, which was only to produce a book.† In this art Gruter was so perfect, that

* Baillet, n. 483. Bayle. Niceron, vol. ix.

† Non curat utrum charta sit cacata, modo libros multos excudat. Scalig. secunda.

CHAP. I.

he never failed to publish one every year, and sometimes every month.* His eulogists have given him credit for acuteness and judgment, and even for elegance and an agreeable variety; but he seems not to have preserved much repute except for his laborious erudition.

Heinsius.

12. Daniel Heinsius, conspicuous as secretary of the synod of Dort, and a Latin poet of distinguished name, was also among the first philologers of his age. Many editions of Greek and Latin writers, or annotations upon them, Theocritus, Hesiod, Maximus Tyrius, Aristotle, Horace, Terence, Silius, Ovid, attest his critical skill. He is praised for a judicious reserve in criticism, avoiding the trifles by which many scholars had wearied their readers, and attending only to what really demanded the aid of a critic, as being corrupt or obscure. His learning was very extensive and profound, so that in the panegyrical tone of the times, he is set above all the living, and almost above all the dead.†

Grotius.

13. Grotius contributed much to ancient philology. His editions of Aratus, Stobæus, the fragments of the lost Greek dramas, Lucan and Tacitus are but a part of those which he published. In the power of illustrating a writer by parallel or resembling passages from others, however remote, his taste and fondness for poetry, as much as his vast erudition, have made him remarkable. In mere critical skill, he was not quite so great a master of the Greek as of the Latin language;

* Bayle, note i.

† Baillet, n. 517.

nör was he equal to restoring the text of the dramatic poets.

Rutgersius, Reinesius, Barthius.

14. The Variæ Lectiones of Rutgersius, in 1618, whose premature death cut off a brilliant promise of erudition, are in six books, almost entirely devoted to emendation of the text, in such a miscellaneous and desultory series of criticisms, as the example of Turnebus and other scholars had rendered usual.* Reinesius, a Saxon physician, in 1640 put forth a book with the same title, a thick volume of about 700 pages, of multifarious learning, chiefly, but not exclusively, classical. He is more intèrpretative, and less attentive to restore corrupted texts than Rutgersius.† The Adversaria of Gaspar Barthius are better known. This work is in 60 books, and extends to about 1500 pages in folio. It is exactly like those of Turnebus and Muretus, an immense repertory of unconnected criticisms and other miscellaneous erudition. The chapters exceed in number the pages, and each chapter contains several articles. There is, however, more connexion, alphabetical or otherwise, than in Turnebus; and they are less exclusively classical, many relating to mediæval and modern writers. The sixtieth book is a com-

* "This work," says Niceron (vol.xxxii.), "is in esteem: the style is neat and polite, the thoughts are just and refined; it has no more quotations than the subject requires."

† Bayle observes of the writings of Reinesius in general, that "good judges of literature have no sooner read some pages, but they place him above those philologers who have only a good memory, and rank him with critics who go beyond their reading and know more than books have taught them. The penetration of their understanding makes them draw consequences, and form conjectures, which lead them to discover hidden treasures. Reinesius was one of these, and made it his chief business to find out what others had not said."

CHAP. I.

mentary on a part of Augustin de Civitate Dei. It is difficult to give a more precise notion of Barthius; he is more *æsthetic* than Turnebus, but less so than Muretus; he explains and corrects fewer intricate texts than the former, but deals more in parallel passages and excursive illustration.* Though Greek appears more than in Turnebus, by far the greater part of Barthius's Adversaria relates to Latin, in the proportion of at least fifteen to one. A few small poems are printed from manuscripts for the first time. Barthius, according to Morhof, though he sometimes explains authors very well, is apt to be rash in his alterations, hasty in his judgments, and has too much useless and frivolous matter. Bayle is not more favourable. Barthius published an edition of Statius, and another of Claudian.

Other critics — English.

15. Rigault, or Rigaltius, Petit, Thysius, and several more, do honour to France and the Low countries during this period. Spain, though not strong in classical philology, produced Ramiresius de Prado, whose Πεντηκονταρχος, sive quinquaginta militum ductor, 1612, is but a book of criticism

* The following are the heads of the fourth chapter of the first book, which may serve as a specimen of the Adversaria: Ad Victoris Uticensis librum primum notæ et emendationes. Limites. Collimitia. Quantitas. H. Stephanus notatur. Impendere. Totum. Omnimodè. Dextrales. Asta. Francisii Balduini audacia castigatur. Tormenta antiqua. Liguamen Arx capitis. Memoriæ. Cruciari. Balduinus denuo aliquoties notatur. It is true that all this farrago arises out of one passage in Victor of Utica, and Barthius is far from being so desultory as Turnebus; but 3000 columns of such notes make but a dictionary without the help of the alphabet. Barthius tells us himself that he had finished two other volumes of Adversaria, besides correcting the first. See the passage in Bayle, note K. But he does not stand on very high ground as a critic, on account of the rapidity with which he wrote, and for the same reason has sometimes contradicted himself. Bayle. Baillet, n. 528. Niceron, vol. vii. Morhof, lib. v. 1. 10.

CHAP. I.

with a quaint title.* In Latin literature we can hardly say that England made herself more conspicuous than in Greek. The notes of John Bond on Horace, published in 1606, are properly a work of the age of Elizabeth: the author was long a schoolmaster in that reign. These notes are only little marginal scholia for the use of boys of no great attainments; and in almost every instance, I believe, taken from Lambinus. This edition of Horace, though Antony Wood calls the author a most noted critic and grammarian, has only the merit of giving the observations of another concisely and perspicuously. Thomas Farnaby is called by Baillet one of the best scholiasts, who says hardly any thing useless, and is very concise.† He has left notes on several of the Latin poets. It is possible that the notes are compiled, like those of Bond, from the foreign critics. Farnaby also was a schoolmaster, and schoolmasters do not write for the learned. He has however been acknowledged on the continent for a diligent and learned man. Wood says he was "the chief grammarian, rhetorician, poet, Latinist, and Grecian of his time; and his school was so much frequented, that more churchmen and statesmen issued thence than from any school taught by one man in England."‡

Salmasius.

16. But the greatest in this province of literature was Claude Saumaise, best known in the Latin form Salmasius, whom the general suffrage

* This has been ascribed by some to his master Sanctius, author of the Minerva, Ramirez himself having been thought unequal to such remarks as we find in it, Baillet, n. 527.

† N. 521.

‡ Athenæ Oxonienses, vol. iii.

CHAP. I.

of his compeers placed at their head. An incredible erudition, so that it was said, what Salmasius did not know, was beyond the bounds of knowledge, a memory such as none but those great scholars of former times seem to have possessed, a life passed, naturally enough, in solitary labour, were sufficient to establish his fame among the learned. His intellectual strength has been more questioned; he wrote, it has been alleged, on many subjects that he did not well understand, and some have reduced his merit to that of a grammatical critic, without altogether rating this so highly as the world has done.* Salmasius was very proud, self-confident, disdainful, and has consequently fallen into many errors, and even contradictions, through precipitancy. In his controversy with Milton, for which he was little fitted, he is rather feeble, and glad to escape from the severity of his antagonist by a defence of his own latinity.† The works of Salmasius are numerous, and on very miscellaneous subjects; among the philological, his Annotations on the Historiæ Augustæ Scriptores seem to deserve mention. But the most remarkable, besides the Commentary on the Hellenistic Dialect, of which an account has been given, is the Plinianæ Exercitationes, published in 1629. These remarks, nominally on

* Baillet, n. 511., is excessively severe on Salmasius; but the homage due to his learning by such an age as that in which he lived cannot be extenuated by the censure of a man like Baillet, of extensive, but rather superficial attainments, and open to much prejudice.

† Milton began the attack by objecting to the use of *persona* for an individual man; but in this mistaken criticism uttered himself the solecism *vapulandum*. See Johnson's Lives of the Poets. This expression had previously been noticed by Vavasseur.

Pliny, are, in the first instance, on Solinus. Salmasius tells us that he had spent much time on Pliny; but finding it beyond the powers of one man to write a commentary on the whole Natural History of that author, he had chosen Solinus, who is a mere compiler from Pliny, and contains nothing from any other source. The Plinianæ Exercitationes is a mass of learning on the geography and natural history of Pliny in more than 900 pages, following the text of the Polyhistor of Solinus.*

Good writers of Latin.

17. It had been the desire of those who aspired to reputation for taste and eloquence to write well in Latin, the sole language, on this side of the Alps and Pyrenees, to which the capacity of choice and polished expression was conceded. But when the French tongue was more cultivated and had a criticism of its own, this became the natural instrument of polite writers in France, and the Latin fell to the merely learned who neglected its beauties. In England it had never been much studied for the purposes of style; and though neither in Germany nor the Low Countries it was very customary to employ the native language, the current Latin of literature was always careless and often barbarous. Even in Italy the number of good writers in that

* Nemo adeo ut propriam, summque veluti regnum, sibi criticen vindicatum ivit, ac Claudius Salmasius, qui, quemadmodum nihil unquam scripsit, in quo non insignia multa artis criticæ vestigia deprehendas, ita imprimis, ut auctores cum notis et castigationibus absolutissimis editos taceamus, vasto illo Plinianarum Exercitationum opere, quantum in eo eruditionis genere valeret demonstratum dedit. Morhof, lib. v. c. 1. § 12. The Jesuits, Petavius and Harduin, who did not cordially praise any Protestant, charged this book with passing over real difficulties, while a mass of heterogeneous matter was foisted in. Le Clerc (or La Croze,) vindicates Salmasius against some censures of Harduin in Bibl. Univ. vol. iv.

CHAP. I.

language was now very scanty. Two deserve to be commemorated with praise, both historians of the same period. The History and Annals of Grotius, in which he seems to have emulated, with more discretion than some others, the nervous brevity of Tacitus, though sometimes not free from a certain hardness and want of flow, nor equal, consequently, in elegance to some productions of the sixteenth century, may be deemed a monument of vigorous and impressive language. The Decads of Famianus Strada, a Roman Jesuit, contain a history of the Flemish war, not written certainly in imitation of Tacitus, whom the author depreciated, but with more classical spirit than we usually find in that age. Scarcely any Latin, however, of this period is equal to that of Barclay in the Argenis and Euphormio. His style, though rather diffuse, and more florid than that of the Augustan age, is perhaps better suited to his subjects, and reminds us of Petronius Arbiter, who was probably his model.

Scioppius.

18. Of the grammatical critics, whose attention was solely turned to the purity of Latin style, two are conspicuous, Gaspar Scioppius and Gerard Vossius. The first, one of those restless and angry spirits whose hand is against all the world, lived a long life of controversy and satire. His productions, as enumerated by Niceron, mostly anonymous, are about one hundred; twenty-seven of which, according to another list, are grammatical.* The Protestants, whom he had abandoned, and the

* Niceron, vol. xxxv. Biog. Univ.

Jesuits whom he would not join, are equally the objects of his anger. In literature, he is celebrated for the bitterness of his attacks on Cicero, whom he spared as little as he did his own contemporaries. But Sciopppius was an admirable master of the Latin language. All that is remembered of his multifarious publications relates to this. We owe to him a much improved edition of the Minerva of Sanctius. His own Grammatica Philosophica, (Milan, 1628,) notwithstanding its title, has no pretensions to be called any thing more than an ordinary Latin grammar. In this I observed nothing remarkable but that he denies the gerund and supine to be parts of the verb, considering the first as passive participles, and the second as nouns substantive; a theory which seems erroneous.

His Philosophical Grammar.

19. The Infamia Famiani of Sciopppius was written against Famianus Strada, whom he hated both as a Jesuit, and as one celebrated for the beauty of his style. This book serves to show how far those who wrote with some eloquence, as Strada certainly did, fell short of classical purity. The faults pointed out are often very obvious to those who have used good dictionaries. Sciopppius is however so fastidious as to reject words employed by Seneca, Tacitus, and even Phædrus, as of the silver age; and sometimes probably is wrong in his dogmatic assertion of a negative, that no good authority can be found.

His Infamia Famiani.

20. But his most considerable work is one called Judicium de Stylo Historico, subjoined to the last, and published after his death, in 1650. This treatise consists chiefly of attacks on the Latin

Judicium de Stylo Historico.

CHAP. I.

style of Thuanus, Lipsius, Casaubon, and other recent authors; but in the course of it we find the remarks of a subtle and severe observer on the ancients themselves. The *silver* age he dates from the latter years of Augustus, placing even Ovid within it. The *brazen* he carries up to Vespasian. In the silver period he finds many single words as well as phrases not agreeable to the usage of more ancient authors. As to the moderns, the Transalpine writers, he says, speaking as an Italian, are always deficient in purity; they mingle the phraseology of different ages as preposterously as if they were to write Greek in a confusion of dialects; they affect obscurity, a broken structure of periods, a studied use of equivocal terms. This is particularly perceived in the school of Lipsius, whose own faults, however, are redeemed by many beauties even of style.* The

* Transalpinis hominibus ex quotidiano Latini sermonis inter ipsos usu, multa sive barbaræ, sive plebeiæ ac deterioris notæ, sic adhærescere solent, ut postea cum stylum arripuere, de Latinitate eorum dubitare nequaquam iis in mentem veniat. Inde fit ut scripta eorum plerumque minus puritatis habeant, quamvis gratia et venustas in iis minimè desideretur. Nam hæc natura duce melius fiebant, quam arte aut studio. Accedit alia causa cur non æquè pura sit multorum Transalpinorum oratio, quod nullo ætatis discrimine ac delectu in autorum lectione versantur, et ex omnium commixtione varium quoddam ac multiforme pro suo quisque ingenio dicendi genus effingunt, contempto hoc Fabii monito: "Diu non nisi optimus quisque et qui credentem sibi minime fallat, legendus est, sed diligenter ac pæne ad scribendi solicitudinem; nec per partes modo scrutanda omnia, sed perlectus liber utique ex integro resumendus." Itaque genus illud corruptæ orationis, seu κακοζηλιας, effugere nequeunt, quod κοινισμον vocant, quæ est quædam mista ex variarum linguarum ratione oratio, ut si Atticis Dorica, Ionica, Æolica etiam dicta confundas; cui simile est si quis sublimia humilibus, vetera novis, poetica vulgaribus, Sallustiana Tullianis, æneæ et ferreæ ætatis vocabula aureis et argenteis misceat, qui Lipsio deductisque ab eo viris, solennis et jam olim familiaris est morbus. In quibus hoc amplius, verba maxime impropria, comprehensionem obscuram, compositionem fractam, aut in frustula concisam, vocum similium aut

Italians, on the contrary, he proceeds to say, read nothing but what is worthy of imitation, and shun every expression that can impair the clearness and purity of a sentence. Yet even in Manutius and in the Jesuit Maffei, he finds instances of barbarism, much more in the French and German scholars of the sixteenth age; expressing contempt upon this account for his old enemy, Joseph Scaliger. Thuanus, he says, is full of modern idioms; a crime not quite unpardonable, when we remember the immensity of his labour, and the greater importance of other objects of it that he had in view.

Gerard Vossius, de Vitiis sermonis.

21. Gerard Vossius, a far greater name in general literature than Scioppius, contributed more essentially to these grammatical rules; and to him, perhaps, rather than to any other one man, we may

ambiguarum puerilem captationem passim animadvertas. Magnis tamen, non nego, virtutibus vitia sua Lipsius redimit, imprimis acumine, venere, salibus (ut excellens viri ingenium ferebat) tum plurimis lectissimis verbis loquendique modis, ex quibus non tam facultatem bene scribendi, ejusque, quod melius est, intellectum ei deesse, quam voluntatem, quo minus rectiora malit, ambitiuscule, plaususque popularis studio præpediri intelligas. Italorum longè dispar ratio. Primum enim non nisi optimum legere et ad imitandum sibi proponere solent; quod judicio quo cæteras nationes omnium consensu superant, imprimis est consentaneum. Deinde nihil non faciunt, ut evitent omnia, unde aliquid injucundæ et contaminandæ orationis periculi ostenditur Latinè igitur nunquam loquuntur, quod fieri vix posse persuasum habeant, quin quotidianus ejus linguæ usus ad instar torrentis lutulentus fluat, et cujusque modi verborum sordes secum rapiat, quæ postea quodam familiaritatis jure sic se scribentibus ingerant, ut etiam diligentissimos fallant, et haud dubie pro Latinis habeantur. Hoc eorum consilium cum non intelligant Transalpini, id eorum inscitiæ perperam assignant. Sic rectè Paulo Manutio usu venit, ut quoniam vix tria verba Latina in familiari sermone proferre poterat, eam Germani complures, qui loquentem audituri ad eum venerunt, vehementer præ se contemnerent. Huic tamen nemo qui sanus sit ad puritatis et elegantiæ Latinæ summam quicquid defuisse dixerit, p. 65.

refer the establishment of as much correctness of writing as is attainable in a dead language. Besides several works on rhetoric and poetry, which, as those topics were usually treated in ages of more erudition than taste or philosophy, resolved themselves into philological disquisitions, looking only to the language of the ancient writers, we have several more strictly within that province. The long use of Latin in writings on modern subjects, before the classical authors had been studied, had brought in a host of barbarisms, that even yet were not expelled. His treatise De Vitiis Sermonis et Glossematis Latino-barbaris is in nine books; four published in 1645, during the author's life; five in 1685. The former are by far the most copious. It is a very large collection of words in use among modern writers, for which there is no adequate authority. Of these many are plainly barbarous, and taken from the writers of the middle ages, or at best from those of the fifth and sixth centuries. Few of such would be used by any tolerable scholar. He includes some which, though in themselves good, have a wrong sense given to them. Words however occur, concerning which one might be ignorant without discredit, especially before the publication of this treatise, which has been the means of correcting the ordinary dictionaries.

22. In the five posthumous books, which may be mentioned in this place, having probably been written before 1650, we find chiefly what the author had forgotten to notice in the former, or had since observed. But the most valuable part relates to the "falso suspecta," which fastidious critics have

unreasonably rejected, generally because they do not appear in the Augustan writers. Those whom he calls "Nizoliani verius quam Ciceroniani," disapproved of all words not found in Cicero.* It is curious to perceive, as Vossius shows us, how many apparently obvious words do not occur in Cicero; yet it would be mere affectation to avoid them. This is perhaps the best part of Vossius's treatise.

His Aristarchus.

23. We are indebted to Vossius for a still more important work on grammar, the Aristarchus, sive de Arte Grammatica, which first appeared in 1635. This is in seven books; the first treats of grammar in general, and especially of the alphabet; the second of syllables, under which head he dwells at great length on prosody†; the third (which, with all the following, is separately entitled De vocum Analogia) of words generally, and of the genders, numbers, and cases of nouns. The same subject occupies the fourth book. In the fifth, he investigates verbs; and in the sixth, the remaining parts of speech. The last book relates to syntax. This work is full of miscellaneous observations, placed for the most part alphabetically under each chapter. It has been said that Vossius has borrowed almost every thing in this treatise from Sanctius and Scioppius. If this be true, we must accuse him of

* Paulus Manutius scrupled to use words on the authority of Cicero's correspondents, such as Cælius or Pollio; a ridiculous affectation, especially when we observe what Vossius has pointed out, that many common words do not occur in Cicero. It is amazing to see the objections of these Ciceronian critics.

† In this we find Vossius aware of the rule brought to light by Dawes, and now familiar, that a final vowel is rarely short before a word beginning with *s* and a mute consonant.

CHAP. I.

unfairness; for he never mentions the Minerva. But the edition of this grammar by Scioppius was not published till after the death of Vossius. Salmasius extolled that of the latter above all which had been published.*

Progress of Latin style.

24. In later times the ambition of writing Latin with accuracy and elegance has so universally declined, that the diligence of Scioppius and Vossius has become hardly valuable except to schoolmasters. It is however an art not contemptible, either in respect to the taste and discernment for which it gives scope in composition, or for the enhanced pleasure it reflects on the pages of ancient writers. We may distinguish several successive periods in its cultivation since the first revival of letters. If we begin with Petrarch, since before his time there was no continuous imitation of classical models, the first period will comprise those who desired much, but reached little, the writers of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, destitute of sufficient aids, and generally incapable of clearly discriminating the pure from the barbarous in Latin. A better æra may be dated from Politian; the ancients were now fully known, and studied with intense labour; the graces of style were frequently caught; yet something was still wanting to its purity and elegance. At the end of a series of improvements, a line marked by Bembus, Sadolet, and Longolius, we arrive at a

* Tuum de grammatica à te accepi exactissimum in hoc genere opus, ac cui nullum priorum aut prisci ævi aut nostri possit comparari. Apud Blount in Vossio. Daunou says of the grammatical and rhetorical writings of Vossius: Ces livres se recommandent par l'exactitude, par la méthode, par une littérature très étendue. Gibert en convient, mais il trouve de la prolixité. D'autres pourraient n'y voir qu'une instruction sérieuse, souvent austère, et presque toujours profitable." Biogr. Univ.

third period, which we may call that of Paulus Manutius, the golden age of modern latinity. The diligence in lexicography of Robert Stephens, of Nizolius, of Manutius himself, and the philological treatises of their times, gave a much greater nicety of expression; while the enthusiasm with which some* of the best writers emulated the ancients inspired them with a sympathetic eloquence and grace. But towards the end of the century, when Manutius, and Muretus, and Maphæus, and others of that school had been removed by death, an age of worse taste and perhaps of more negligence in grammar came on, yet one of great scholars, and of men powerful even in language; the age of Lipsius, of Scaliger, of Grotius. This may be called the fourth period; and in this apparently the purity of the language, as well as its beauty, rather declined. Finally, the publications of Scioppius and Vossius mark the beginning of another period, which we may consider as lasting to the present day. Grammatical criticism had nearly reached the point at which it now stands; the additions, at least, which later philologers, Perizonius, Burman, Bentley, and many others have made, though by no means inconsiderable, seem hardly sufficient to constitute a distinct period, even if we could refer them properly to any single epoch. And the praise of eloquent composition has been so little sought after the close of the years passed in education, or attained only in short and occasional writings, which have left no durable reputation behind, that we may consider the Latin language, for this purpose, to have silently expired in the regions of polite literature.

Sect. II.

Antiquities of Rome and Greece — Gruter — Meursius — Chronology.

CHAP. I.

Gruter's collection of inscriptions.

25. The antiquities of Greece and Rome, though they did not occupy so great a relative space in the literature of this period as of the sixteenth century, were, from the general increase of erudition, not less frequently the subject of books than before. This field indeed is so vast, that its harvest had in many parts been scarcely touched, and in others very imperfectly gathered by those we have already commemorated, the Sigonii, the Manutii, the Lipsii, and their fellow-labourers in ancient learning. The present century opened with a great work, the Corpus Inscriptionum by Gruter. A few endeavours had long before been made* to collect the antient inscriptions, of which the countries once Roman, and especially Italy, were full. The best work hitherto was by Martin Smetius of Bruges, after whose death his collection of inscriptions was published at Leyden in 1588, under the superintendence of Dousa and Lipsius.

Assisted by Scaliger.

26. Scaliger first excited his friend Gruter to undertake the task of giving an enlarged edition of Smetius.† He made the index for this himself, devoting the labour of the entire morning for ten months (a summo mane ad tempus cœnæ) to an occupation from which so little glory could accrue.

* See Vol. I. p. 452.

† Burman in Præfatione ad Gruteri Corpus Inscript. Several of Scaliger's epistles prove this, especially the 405th, addressed to Gruter.

"Who," says Burman, "would not admire the liberal erudition and unpretending modesty of the learned of that age, who, worn as they were by those long and weary labours of which they freely complain in their correspondence with each other, though they knew that such occupations as these could gain for them no better name than that of common clerks or mere drudges, yet hesitated not to abandon for the advantage of the public those pursuits which a higher fame might be expected to reward? Who in these times would imitate the generosity of Scaliger, who, when he might have ascribed to himself this addition to the work of Smetius, gave away his own right to Gruter, and declined to let his name be prefixed either to the index which he had wholly compiled, or to the many observations by which he corrects and explains the inscriptions, and desired, in recompence for the industry of Gruter, that he alone should pass with posterity as the author of the work?" * Gruter, it is observed by Le Clerc, has committed many faults: he often repeats the same inscriptions, and still more frequently has printed them from erroneous copies; his quotations from authors, in whom inscriptions are found, sometimes want exactness; finally, for which he could not well be answerable, a vast many have since been brought to light.† In consequence of the publication of

* Id. p. 6.

† Bibl. Choisie, vol. xiv. p. 51. Burman, *ubi supra*, gives a strange reason for reprinting Gruter's Inscriptions with all their blemishes, even the repetitions; namely, that it was convenient to preserve the number of pages which had been so continually referred to in all learned works, the simple contrivance of keeping the original numeration in the margin not having occurred to him.

CHAP. I.

Gruter's Inscriptions, the learned began with incredible zeal to examine old marbles for inscriptions, and to insert them in any work that had reference to antiquity. Reinesius collected as many as make a respectable supplement.* But a sort of æra in lapidary learning was made by Selden's description, in 1629, of the marbles, brought by the Earl of Arundel from Greece, and which now belong to the university of Oxford. These contain a chronology of the early times of Greece, on which great reliance has often been placed, though their antiquity is not accounted very high in comparison with those times.

Works on Roman antiquity.

27. The Jesuit Donati published, in 1633, Roma vetus et nova, which is not only much superior to any thing previously written on the antiquities of the city, but is preferred by some competent judges to the later and more known work of Nardini. Both these will be found, with others of an earlier date, in the third and fourth volumes of Grævius. The tenth volume of the same collection contains a translation from the history of the Great Roads of the Roman Empire, published in French by Nicolas Bergier in 1622; ill arranged, it has been said, and diffuse, according to the custom of his age, but inferior, Grævius declares, in variety of learning to no one work that he has inserted in his numerous volumes. Guther, whose treatise on the pontifical law of Rome appears in the fifth volume, was, says the editor, "a man of various and extended reading, who had made extracts from every class of writers, but had not always digested his learning or weighed what he wrote.

* Burman, *ubi supra*.

Hence much has been found open to criticism in his writings, and there remains a sufficient harvest of the same kind for any one who should care to undertake it." The best work on Roman dress is by Octavius Ferrarius, published partly in 1642, partly in 1654. This has been called superficial by Spanheim; but Grævius, and several other men of learning, bestow more praise.* The Isiac tablet, covered with emblems of Egyptian antiquity, was illustrated by Pignoria, in a work bearing different titles in the successive editions from 1605; and his explanations are still considered probable. Pignoria's other writings were also in high esteem with the antiquaries.† It would be tedious to enumerate the less important productions of this kind. A minute and scrupulous criticism, it has been said, distinguished the antiquaries of the seventeenth century. Without, perhaps, the comprehensive views of Sigonius and Panvinius, they were more severely exact. Hence forgery and falsehood stood a much worse chance of success than before. Annius of Viterbo had deceived half the scholars of the preceding age. But when Inghirami, in 1637, published his Etruscarum Antiquitatum Fragmenta, monuments of Etruscan antiquity, which he pretended to have discovered at Volterra, the imposture was speedily detected.‡

Geography of Cluverius.

28. The Germania Antiqua of Cluverius was published in 1616, and his Italia Antiqua in 1624.

* Niceron, v. 80. Tiraboschi, xi. 300.

† Niceron, vol. xxi. Biog. Univ.

‡ Salfi (Continuation de Ginguéné), xi. 358.

CHAP. I.

These form a sort of epoch in ancient geography. The latter, especially, has ever since been the great repertory of classical illustration on this subject. Cluverius, however, though a man of acknowledged ability and erudition, has been thought too bold an innovator in his Germany, and to have laid down much on his own conjecture.*

Meursius.

29. Meursius, a native of Holland, began when very young, soon after the commencement of the century, those indefatigable labours on Grecian antiquity, by which he became to Athens and all Hellas what Sigonius had been to Rome and Italy. Niceron has given a list of his publications, sixty-seven in number, including some editions of ancient writers, but for the most part confined to illustrations of Greek usages; some also treat of Roman. The Græcia feriata, on festivals and games; the Orchestra, on dancing; the Eleusinia, on that deeply interesting and in his time almost untouched subject, the ancient mysteries, are collected in the works of this very learned person, or scattered through the Thesaurus Antiquitatum Græcarum of Gronovius. "Meursius," says his editor, "was the true and legitimate mystagogue to the sanctuaries of Greece." But his peculiar attention was justly shown to "the eye of Greece," Athens. Nothing that bore on her history, her laws and government, her manners and literature, was left by him. The various titles of his works seem almost to exhaust Athenian antiquity: De Populis Atticæ — Athenæ Atticæ — Cecropia — Regnum Atticum — Archontes Athenienses — Pi-

* Blount. Niceron, vol. xxi. Biogr. Univ.

sistratus — Fortuna Attica — Atticarum Lectionum Libri IV. — Piræeus — Themis Attica — Solon — Areopagus — Panathenæa — Eleusinia — Theseus — Æschylus—Sophocles et Euripides. It is manifest that all later learning must have been built upon his foundations. No one was equal to Meursius in this province; but the second place is perhaps due to Ubbo Emmius, professor of Greek at Groningen, for his Vetus Græcia Illustrata, 1626. The facilities of elucidating the topography of that country were by no means such as Cluverius had found for Italy; and in fact little was done in respect to local investigation in order to establish a good ancient geography till recent times. Samuel Petit, a man placed by some in the very first list of the learned, published in 1635 a commentary on the Athenian laws, which is still the chief authority on that subject.

Ubbo Emmius.

30. In an age so peculiarly learned as this part of the seventeenth century, it will be readily concluded that many books must have a relation to the extensive subject of this section; though the stream of erudition had taken rather a different course, and watered the provinces of ecclesiastical and mediæval more than those of heathen antiquity. But we can only select one or two which treat of chronology, and that chiefly because we have already given a place to the work of Scaliger.

Chronology of Lydiat. Calvisius.

31. Lydiat was the first who, in a small treatise on the various calendars, 1605, presumed in several respects to differ from that of the dictator of literature. He is in consequence reviled in Scaliger's Epistles as the most stupid and ignorant of

CHAP. I.

the human race, a portentous birth of England, or at best an ass and a beetle, whom it is below the dignity of the author to answer.* Lydiat was however esteemed a man of deep learning, and did not flinch from the contest. His Emendatio Temporum, published in 1609, is a more general censure of the Scaligerian chronology, but it is rather a short work for the extent of the subject. A German, Seth Calvisius, on the other hand, is extolled to the skies by Scaliger for a chronology founded on his own principles. These are applied in it to the whole series of history, and thus Calvisius may be said to have made an epoch in historical literature. He made more use of eclipses than any preceding writer; and his dates are reckoned as accurate in modern as in ancient history.†

Petavius.

32. Scaliger, nearly twenty years after his death, was assailed by an adversary whom he could not have thought it unworthy of his name to repel. Petau, or Petavius, a Jesuit of uncommon learning, devoted the whole of the first of two large volumes, entitled Doctrina Temporum, 1627, to a censure of the famous work De Emendatione Temporum. This volume is divided into eight books; the first on the popular year of the

* Ante aliquot dies tibi scripsi, ut scirem ex te quis sit Thomas Lydiat iste, quo monstro nullum portentosius in vestra Anglia natum puto; tanta est inscitia hominis et confidentia. Ne semel quidem illi verum dicere accidit. And again: — Non est similis morio in orbe terrarum. Paucis asinitatem ejus perstringam ut lector rideat. Nam in tam prodigiosè imperitum scarabæum scribere, neque nostræ dignitatis est, neque otii. Scalig. Epist. 291. Usher, nevertheless, if we may trust Wood, thought Scaliger worsted by Lydiat. Ath. Oxon. iii. 187.

† Blount. Biogr. Univ.

Greeks; the second on the lunar; the third on the Ægyptian, Persian and Armenian; the fourth on the solar year; the fifth treats of the correction of the paschal cycle and the calendar; the sixth discusses the principles of the lunar and solar cycles; the seventh is entitled an introduction to computations of various kinds, among which he reckons the Julian period; the eighth is on the true motions of the sun and moon, and on their eclipses. In almost every chapter of the first five books, Scaliger is censured, refuted, reviled. It was a retribution upon his own arrogance; but published thus after his death, with no justice done to his great learning and ability, and scarcely the common terms of respect towards a mighty name, it is impossible not to discern in Petavius both an envious mind, and a partial desire to injure the fame of a distinguished protestant. His virulence indeed against Scaliger becomes almost ridiculous. At the beginning of each of the first five books, he lays it down as a theorem to be demonstrated, that Scaliger is always wrong on the particular subjects to which it relates; and at the close of each, he repeats the same in geometrical form as having been proved. He does not even give him credit for the invention of the Julian period, though he adopts it himself with much praise, positively asserting that it is borrowed from the Byzantine Greeks.* The second volume is in five books, and is dedicated to the historical part of chronology, and the application of the principles laid down before. A third volume, in 1630,

* Lib. vii. c. 7.

CHAP. I.

relating to the same subjects, though bearing a different title, is generally considered as part of the work. Petavius, in 1633, published an abridgment of his chronological system, entitled Rationarium Temporum, to which he subjoined a table of events down to his own time, which in the larger work had only been carried to the fall of the empire. This abridgment is better known, and more generally useful than the former.

Character of this work.

33. The merits of Petavius as a chronologer have been differently appreciated. Many, of whom Huet is one, from religious prejudices rejoiced in what they hoped to be a discomfiture of Scaliger, whose arrogance had also made enemies of a large part of the literary world. Even Vossius, after praising Petavius, declares that he is unwilling to decide between men who have done for chronology more than any others.* But he has not always been so favourably dealt with. Le Clerc observes, that as Scaliger is not very perspicuous, and Petavius has explained the former's opinions before

* Vossius apud Niceron, xxxvii. 111. Dionysius Petavius permulta post Scaligerum optime observavit. Sed nolim judicium interponere inter eos, quorum uterque præclare adeo de chronologia meritus est, ut nullis plus hæc scientia debeat. . . . Qui sine affectu ac partium studio conferre volet quæ de temporibus scripsere, conspiciet esse ubi Scaligero major laus debeatur, comperiet quoque ubi longe Petavio malit assentiri; erit etiam ubi ampliandum videatur; imo ubi nec facile veritas à quoquam possit indagari. The chronology of Petavius was animadverted upon by Salmasius with much rudeness, and by several other contemporaries engaged in the same controversy. If we were to believe Baillet, Petavius was not only the most learned of the order of Jesuits, but surpassed Salmasius himself *de plusieurs coudées*. Jugemens des Sçavans, n. 513. But to judge between giants we should be a little taller ourselves than most are. Baillet, indeed, quotes Henry Valois for this preference of Petavius to any other of his age, which, in other words, is much the same as to call him the most learned man that ever lived; and Valois was a very competent judge. The words, however, are found in a funeral panegyric.

he proceeds to refute them, those who compare the two will have this advantage, that they will understand Scaliger better than before.* This is not very complimentary to his opponent. A modern writer of respectable authority gives us no reason to consider him victorious. "Though the great work of Petavius on chronology," says M. St. Martin, "is certainly a very estimable production, it is not less certain that he has in no degree contributed to enlarge the boundaries of the science. The author shows too much anxiety to refute Scaliger, whether right or wrong; his sole aim is to destroy the edifice, perhaps too boldly elevated by his adversary. It is not unjust to say that Petavius has literally done nothing for positive chronology; he has not even determined with accuracy what is most incontestable in this science. Many of the dates which he considers as well established, are still subject to great doubt, and might be settled in a very different manner. His work is clear and methodical; and, as it embraces the whole of chronology, it might have become of great authority: but these very qualities have rendered it injurious to the science. He came to arrest the flight which, through the genius of Scaliger, it was ready to take, nor has it made the least progress ever since; it has produced nothing but conjectures, more or less showy, but with nothing solid and undeniable for their basis." †

* Bibl. Choisie, ii. 186. A short abstract of the Petavian scheme of chronology will be found in this volume of Le Clerc.

† Biogr. Univ. art. Petavius.

CHAP. II.

HISTORY OF THEOLOGICAL LITERATURE IN EUROPE, FROM 1600 TO 1650.

Claim of Popes to temporal Power — Father Paul Sarpi — Gradual Decline of papal Power — Unpopularity of Jesuits — Controversy of Catholics and Protestants — Deference of some of the latter to Antiquity — Wavering in Casaubon — Still more in Grotius — Calixtus — An opposite School of Theologians — Daillé — Chillingworth — Hales — Rise of the Arminian Controversy — Episcopius — Socinians — Question as to Rights of Magistrates in Religion — Writings of Grotius on this Subject — Question of Religious Toleration — Taylor's Liberty of Prophesying — Theological Critics and Commentators — Sermons of Donne — and Taylor — Deistical Writers — English Translation of the Bible.

CHAP. II.

Temporal supremacy of Rome.

1. The claim of the Roman see to depose sovereigns was like the retractile claws of some animals, which would be liable to injury were they not usually sheathed. If the state of religion in England and France towards the latter part of the sixteenth century required the assertion of these pretended rights, it was not the policy of a court, guided as often by prudence as by zeal or pride, to keep them for ever before the eyes of the world. Clement VIII. wanted not these latter qualities, but they were restrained by the former; and the circumstances in which the new century opened, did not demand any open collision with the civil power. Henry IV. had been received back into the bosom of the church; he was now rather the ally, the favoured child of Rome, than the object of proscription. Elizabeth again was out of the reach of

CHAP. II.

any enemy but death, and much was hoped from the hereditary disposition of her successor. The temporal supremacy would therefore have been left for obscure and unauthorized writers to vindicate, if an unforeseen circumstance had not called out again its most celebrated champions. After the detection of the gunpowder conspiracy, an oath of allegiance was imposed in England, containing a renunciation, in strong terms, of the tenet that princes excommunicated by the pope might be deposed or murdered by their subjects. None of the English catholics refused allegiance to James; and most of them probably would have felt little scruple at taking the entire oath, which their arch-priest, Blackwell, had approved. But the see of Rome interfered to censure those who took the oath; and a controversy singularly began with James himself in his "Apology for the Oath of Allegiance." Bellarmin answered, in 1610, under the name of Matthew Tortus; and the duty of defending the royal author was devolved on one of our most learned divines, Lancelot Andrews, who gave to his reply the quaint title, Tortura Torti.* But this favourite tenet of the Vatican was as ill fitted to please the Gallican as the English church. Barclay, a lawyer of Scottish family, had long defended the rights of the crown of France against all opponents. His posthumous treatise on the temporal power of the pope with respect to sove-

* Biogr. Britann. art. Andrews. Collier's Ecclesiastical History. Butler's English Catholics, vol. i. Matthew Tortus was the almoner of Bellarmin, whose name he thought fit to assume as a very slight disguise.

CHAP. II.

reign princes was published at London in 1609. Bellarmin answered it next year in the ultra-montane spirit which he had always breathed; the parliament of Paris forbad the circulation of his reply.*

Contest with Venice.

2. Paul V. was a pope imbued with the arrogant spirit of his predecessors, Paul IV. and Pius V.; no one was more prompt to exercise the despotism which the Jesuits were ready to maintain. After some minor disputes with the Italian states, he came, in 1605, to his famous conflict with the republic of Venice, on the very important question of the immunity of ecclesiastics from the civil tribunals. Though he did not absolve the subjects of Venice from their allegiance, he put the state under an interdict, forbidding the celebration of divine offices throughout its territory. The Venetian clergy, except the Jesuits and some other regulars, obeyed the senate rather than the pope. The whole is matter of known history. In the termination of this dispute, it has been doubted which party obtained the victory; but in the ultimate result and effect upon mankind, we cannot, it seems, well doubt

* Il pretesto, says Father Paul of Bellarmin's book, è di scrivere contra Barclajo; ma il vero fine si vede esser per ridurre il papa al colmo dell omnipotente. In questo libro non si tratta altro, che il suddetto argumento, e più di venti cinque volte è replicato, che quando il papa giudica un principe indegno per sua colpa d'aver governo overo inetto, ò pur conosce, che per il bene della chiesa sia cosa utile, lo può privare. Dice più volte, che quando il papa comanda, che non sia ubbidito ad un principe privato da lui, non si può dire, che comandi che principe non sia ubbidito, ma che privata persona, perchè il principe privato dal papa non è più principe. E passa tanto inanzi, che viene à dire, il papa può disponere secondo che giudica ispediente de' tutti i beni di qual sivoglia Christiano, ma tutto sarebbe niente, se solo dicesse che tale è la sua opinione; dice, ch' è un articolo della fede catholica, ch' è eretico, chi non sente così, e questo con tanta petulantia, che non vi si può aggiungere. Lettere di Sarpi, 50.

that the see of Rome was the loser.* Nothing was more worthy of remark, especially in literary history, than the appearance of one great man, Fra Paolo Sarpi, the first who, in modern times and in a Catholic country, shook the fabric not only of papal despotism, but of ecclesiastical independence and power. For it is to be observed that in the Venetian business, the pope was contending for what were called the rights of the church, not for his own supremacy over it. Sarpi was a man of extraordinary genius, learning, and judgment: his physical and anatomical knowledge was such as to have caused at least several great discoveries to be assigned to him†; his reasoning was concise and cogent; his style perspicuous and animated. A treatise "Delle Materie Beneficiarie," in other words, on the rights, revenues, and privileges, in secular matters, of the ecclesiastical order, is a model in its way. The history is so short and yet so sufficient, the sequence so natural and clear, the proofs so judiciously introduced, that it can never be read without delight and admiration of the author's skill. And this is more striking to those who have toiled at the verbose books of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, where tedious quotations, accumulated, not selected, disguise the argument they are meant to confirm. Except the first book

Father Paul Sarpi.

* Ranke is the best authority on this dispute, as he is on all other matters relating to the papacy in this age, vol. ii. p. 324.

† He was supposed to have discovered the valves of the veins, the circulation of the blood, the expansion and contraction of the pupil, the variation of the compass. A quo, says Baptista Porta of Sarpi, aliqua didicisse non solum fateri non erubescimus, sed gloriamur, cum eo doctiorem, subtiliorem, quotquot adhuc videre contigerit, neminem cognovimus ad encyclopaediam. Magia Naturalis, lib. vii. apud Ranke.

CHAP. II.

of Machiavel's History of Florence, I do not remember any earlier summary of facts so lucid and pertinent to the object. That object was, with Father Paul, neither more nor less than to represent the wealth and power of the church as ill-gotten and excessive. The Treatise on Benefices led the way, or rather was the seed thrown into the ground that ultimately produced the many efforts both of the press and of public authority to break down ecclesiastical privileges.*

History of Council of Trent.

3. The other works of Sarpi are numerous, but none require our present attention except the most celebrated, his History of the Council of Trent. The manuscript of this having been brought to London by Antonio de Dominis, was there published, in 1619, under the name of Pietro Soave Polano, the anagram of Paolo Sarpi Veneto. It was quickly translated into several languages, and became the text-book of protestantism on the subject. Many incorrectnesses have been pointed out by Pallavicini, who undertook the same task on the side of Rome; but the general credibility of Father Paul's history has rather gained by the ordeal of hostile criticism. Dupin observes that the long list of errors imputed by Pallavicini, which are chiefly in dates and such trifling matters, make little or no difference as to the substance of Sarpi's history; but that its author is more blamable for a malicious disposition to impute political motives to the members of the council, and idle reasonings

* A long analysis of the Treatise on Benefices will be found in Dupin, who does not blame it very much. It is worth reading through, and has been commended by many good judges of history.

which they did not employ.* Ranke, who has given this a more minute scrutiny than Dupin could have done, comes nearly to the same result. Sarpi is not a fair, but he is, for those times, a tolerably exact historian. His work exhibits the general excellences of his manner; freedom from redundancy, a clear, full, agreeable style; a choice of what is most pertinent and interesting in his materials. Much has been disputed about the religious tenets of Father Paul; it appears to me quite out of doubt, both by the tenour of his history, and still more unequivocally, if possible, by some of his letters, that he was entirely hostile to the church, in the usual sense, as well as to the court of Rome, sympathizing in affection, and concurring generally in opinion, with the reformed denomination.† But as he continued in the exercise of his

* Hist. Eccles. Cent. 17.

† The proofs of this it would be endless to adduce from the history: they strike the eye in every page, though it cannot be expected that he should declare his way of thinking in express terms. Even in his letters he does not this. They were printed, with the date, at least, of Verona, in 1673. Sully's fall he laments, "having become partial to him on account of his firmness in religion." Lett. 53. Of the republic of the United Provinces he says: La nascenza di quale si come Dio ha favorito con grazie inestimabili, così pare che la malizia del diavolo oppugni con tutte le arti. Lett. 23. After giving an account of one Marsilio, who seems to have been a Protestant, he adds: Credo se non fosse per ragion di stato, si trovarebbono diversi, che saltarebbono da questo fosso di Roma nella cima dell riforma; ma chi teme una cosa, chi un' altra. Dio però par che goda la più minima parte dei pensieri umani. So ch' ella mi intende senza passar più oltre. Lett. 81. Feb. 1612. Sarpi speaks with great contempt of James I., who was occupied like a pedant about Vorstius and such matters. Se il re d' Inghilterra non fosse dottore, si potrebbe sperare qualche bene, e sarebbe un gran principio, perchè Spagna non si può vincere, se non levato il pretesto della religione, ne questo si leverà se non introducendo i reformati nell' Italia. E si il rè sapesse fare, sarebbe facile e in Torino, e quì. Lett. 88. He wrote, however, a remarkable letter to Casaubon, much about this time, hinting at his wish to find an asylum in England, and using rather too different language about the king: In eo, rarum, cumulatæ virtutes principis ac viri. Regum idea est, ad quam forte ante actis sæculis

CHAP. II.

functions as a Servite monk, and has always passed at Venice more for a saint than a heretic, some of the Gallican writers have not scrupled to make use of his authority, and to extenuate his heterodoxy. There can be no question but that he inflicted a severe wound on the spiritual power.

Gallican liberties. Richer.

4. That power, predominant as it seemed in the beginning of the seventeenth century, met with adversaries besides Sarpi. The French nation, and especially the parliament of Paris, had always vaunted what were called the liberties of the Gallican church; liberties, however, for which neither the church itself, nor the king, the two parties interested, were prone to display much regard. A certain canonist, Richer, published in 1611 a book on ecclesiastical and political power; in which he asserted the government of the church to be a monarchy tempered with aristocracy; that is, that the authority of the pope was limited in some respects by the rights of the bishops. Though this has since become a fundamental principle among the Cisalpine catholics, it did not suit the high notions of that age; and the bishops were content to sacrifice their rights by joining in the clamour of the papal party. A synod assembled by Cardinal du Perron, archbishop

nemo formatus fuit. Si ego ejus protectione dignus essem, nihil mihi deesse putarem ad mortalis vitæ felicitatem. Tu, vir præstantissime, nihil te dignius efficere potes, quam tanto principi mea studia commendare. Casaubon, Epist. 811. For *mea* in another edition is read *tua*; but the former seems preferable. Casaubon replied, that the king wished Paul to be a light to his own country; but if any thing should happen, he had written to his ambassador, ut nulla in re tibi desit.

of Sens, condemned the book of Richer, who was harassed for the rest of his life by the persecution of those he had sought to defend against a servitude which they seemed to covet. His fame has risen in later times. Dupin concludes a careful analysis of Richer's treatise with a noble panegyric on his character and style of writing.* CHAP. II.

Perron.

5. The strength of the ultra-montane party in the Gallican church was Perron, a man of great natural capacity, a prodigious memory, a vast knowledge of ecclesiastical and profane antiquity, a sharp wit, a pure and eloquent style, and such readiness in dispute, that few cared to engage him.† If he did not always reason justly, or upon consistent principles, these are rather failings in the eyes of lovers of truth, than of those, and they are the many, who sympathize with the dexterity and readiness of a partizan. He had been educated as a Protestant, but, like half the learned of that religion, went over from some motive or other to the victorious side. In the conference at Fontainebleau with Du Plessis

* Hist. Eccles. Cent. 17. l. ii. c. 7. Niceron, vol. xxvii. The Biographie Universelle talks of the republican principles of Richer: it must be in an ecclesiastical sense, for nothing in the book, I think, relates to civil politics. Father Paul thought Richer's scheme might lead to something better, but did not highly esteem it. Quella mistura del governo ecclesiastico di monarchia e aristocrazia mi pare una composizione di oglio e acqua, che non possono mai mischiarsi insieme. Lettere di Sarpi, 109. Richer entirely denies the infallibility of the pope in matters of faith, and says there is no authority adduced for it but that of the popes themselves. His work is written on the principles of the Jansenizing Gallicans of the 18th century, and probably goes farther than Bossuet, or any who wished to keep on good terms with Rome would have openly approved. It is prolix, extending to two volumes 4to. Some account of Richer will be found in Histoire de la Mère et du Fils, ascribed to Mezeray, or Richelieu.

† Dupin.

CHAP. II.

Mornay, it has been mentioned already that he had a confessed advantage; but victory in debate follows the combatant rather than the cause. The supporters of Gallican liberties were discouraged during the life of this cardinal. He did not explicitly set himself against them, or deny, perhaps, the principles of the Council of Constance; but by preventing any assertion of them, he prepared the way, as it was hoped at Rome, for a gradual recognition of the whole system of Bellarmin. Perron, however, was neither a Jesuit, nor very favourable to that order. Even so late as 1638, a collection of tracts by the learned brothers Du Puy, on the liberties of the church, was suppressed at the instance of the nuncio, on the pretext that it had been published without permission. It was reprinted some years afterwards, when the power of Rome had begun to decline.*

6. Notwithstanding the tone still held by the court of Rome and its numerous partisans, when provoked by any demonstration of resistance, they generally avoided aggressive proceedings, and kept in reserve the tenets which could not be pleasing to any civil government. We should doubtless find many assertions of the temporal authority of the pope by searching into obscure theology during this period; but after Bellarmin and Perron were withdrawn from the stage, no prominent champions of that cause stood forth; and it was one

* Dupin l. iii. c. 1. Grot. Epist. 1105. Liber de libertatibus ecclesiæ Gallicanæ ex actis desumptus publicis, quo regis regnique jura contra molitiones pontificias defenduntur ipsius regis jussu vendi est prohibitus. See also epist. 519.

of which great talents and high station alone could overcome the intrinsic unpopularity. Slowly and silently, the power of Rome had much receded before the middle of the seventeenth century. Paul V. was the last of the imperious pontiffs who exacted obedience as sovereigns of Christendom. His successors have had recourse to gentler methods, to a paternal rather than regal authority; they have appealed to the moral sense, but have rarely or never alarmed the fears of their church. The long pontificate of Urban VIII. was a period of transition from strength to weakness. In his first years, this pope was not inactively occupied in the great cause of subduing the Protestant heresy. It has been lately brought to light, that soon after the accession of Charles I., he had formed a scheme, in conjunction with France and Spain, for conquering and partitioning the British islands: Ireland was to be annexed to the ecclesiastical state, and governed by a viceroy of the Holy See.* But he afterwards gave up these visionary projects, and limited his ambition to more practicable views of aggrandizement in Italy. It is certain that the temporal principality of the popes has often been an useful diversion for the rest of Europe: the duchy of Urbino was less in our notions of importance than Germany or Britain; but it was quite as capable of engrossing the thoughts and passions of a pope.

* Ranke, ii. 518. It is not at all probable that France and Spain would have seriously coalesced for any object of this kind: the spoil could not have been safely divided. But the scheme serves to show the ambition, at that time, of the Roman see.

CHAP. II.

Unpopularity of the Jesuits.

7. The subsidence of catholic zeal before the middle of this age deserves especially to be noted at a time when, in various directions, that church is beginning to exalt her voice, if not to rear her head, and we are ostentatiously reminded of the sudden revival of her influence in the sixteenth century. It did undoubtedly then revive; but it is equally manifest that it receded once more. Among the leading causes of this decline in the influence, not only of what are called ultra-montane principles, but of the zeal and faith that had attended them, a change as visible, and almost as rapid as the re-action in favour of them which we have pointed out in the latter part of the sixteenth century, we must reckon the increasing prejudices against the Jesuit order. Their zeal, union, indefatigable devotion to the cause, had made them the most useful of allies, the most formidable of enemies; but in these very qualities were involved the seeds of public hatred and ultimate ruin. Obnoxious to Protestant states for their intrigues, to the lawyers, especially in France, for their bold theories of political power and encroaching spirit, to the Dominicans for the favour they had won, they had become long before the close of this period rather equivocal and dangerous supporters of the See of Rome.* Their fate, in countries where the temper of their order had displayed itself with less restraint, might have led reflecting men to anticipate the consequences of urging too

* Clement VIII. was tired of the Jesuits, as we are told by Perron, who did not much love them. Perroniana, pp. 286. 288.

far the patience of mankind by the ambition of an insulated order of priests. In the first part of this century the Jesuits possessed an extensive influence in Japan, and had re-united the kingdom of Abyssinia to the Roman church. In the course of a few years more, they were driven out from both; their intriguing ambition had excited an implacable animosity against the church to which they belonged.

Richelieu's care of Gallican liberties.

8. Cardinal Richelieu, though himself a theological writer, took great care to maintain the liberties of the French crown and church. No extravagance of Hildebrandic principles would find countenance under his administration. Their partisans endeavoured sometimes to murmur against his ecclesiastical measures; it was darkly rumoured that he had a scheme of separating the Catholic church of France, something in the manner of Henry VIII., from the supremacy of Rome, though not from her creed; and one Hersent published, under the name of Optatus Gallus, a book so rapidly suppressed, as to be of the greatest rarity, the aim of which was to excite the public apprehension of this schism.* It was in defence of the Gallican liberties, so far as it was yet prudent to assert them, that De Marca was employed to write a treatise, De Concordantiâ Sacerdotii et Imperii. This book was censured at Rome; yet it does not by any means come up to the language afterwards usual in the Gallican

* Biogr. Univ.—Grot. epist. 982. 1354. By some other letters of Grotius, it appears that Richelieu tampered with those schemes of reconciling the different religions which were then afloat, and all which went on setting the Pope nearly aside. Ruarus intimates the same. Epist. Ruar. p. 401.

CHAP. II.

church; it belongs to its own age, the transitional period in which Rome had just ceased to act, but not to speak as a mistress. De Marca was obliged to make some concessions before he could obtain the bulls for a bishopric. He rose however afterwards to the see of Paris. The first part of his work appeared in 1641, the second after the death of the author.

Controversy of Catholics and Protestants.

9. In this most learned period, according to the sense in which the word was then taken, that Europe has ever seen, it was of course to be expected that the studious ecclesiastics of both the Romish and Protestant denomination would pour forth a prodigal erudition in their great controversy. It had always been the aim of the former to give an historical character to theological inquiry; it was their business to ascertain the faith of the Catholic church as a matter of fact, the single principle of its infallibility being assumed as the basis of all investigation. But their opponents, though less concerned in the issue of such questions, frequently thought themselves competent to dispute the field; and conversant as they were with ecclesiastical antiquity, found in its interminable records sufficient weapons to protract the war, though not to subdue the foe. Hence, partly in the last years of the sixteenth century, but incomparably more in the present, we find an essential change in the character of theological controversy. It became less reasoning, less scriptural, less general and popular, but far more patristic, that is, appealing to the testimonies of the fathers, and altogether more historical than before. Several consequences of material influence

Increased respect for the fathers.

CHAP. II.

on religious opinion sprang naturally from this method of conducting the defence of Protestantism. One was that it contracted very greatly the circle of those who, upon any reasonable interpretation of the original principle of personal judgment, could exercise it for themselves; it became the privilege of the deeply learned alone. Another that, from the real obscurity and incoherence of ecclesiastical authorities, those who had penetrated farthest into that province of learning were least able to reconcile them; and however they might disguise it from the world, while the pen was in their hands, were themselves necessarily left, upon many points, in an embarrassing state of doubt and confusion. A third effect was, that upon these controversies of Catholic tradition, the church of Rome had very often the best of the argument; and this was occasionally displayed in those wrestling matches between religious disputants, which were held, publicly or privately, either with the vain hope of coming to an agreement, or to settle the faith of the hearers. And from the two last of these causes it arose, that many Protestants went over to the church of Rome, and that a new theological system was contrived to combine what had been deemed the incompatible tenets of those who had burst from each other with such violence in the preceding century.

Especially in England. Laud.

10. This retrocession, as it appeared, and as in spirit it was, towards the system abandoned in the first impetuosity of the Reformation, began in England about the conclusion of the sixteenth century. It was evidently connected with the high notions

CHAP. II.

of ecclesiastical power, of an episcopacy by unbroken transmission from the apostles, of a pompous ritual, which the rulers of the Anglican church took up at that time in opposition to the Puritans. It rapidly gained ground in the reign of James, and still more of his son. Andrews, a man far more learned in patristic theology than any of the Elizabethan bishops, or perhaps than any of his English contemporaries except Usher, was, if not the founder, the chief leader of this school. Laud became afterwards, from his political importance, its more conspicuous head; and from him it is sometimes styled. In his conference with the Jesuit Fisher, first published in 1624, and afterwards with many additions in 1639, we find an attempt, not feeble, and we may believe, not feigned, to vindicate the Anglican Protestantism, such as he meant it to be, against the church of Rome, but with much deference to the name of Catholic, and the authority of the ancient fathers.* It is unnecessary to observe, that this was the prevalent language of the English church in that period of forty years, which was terminated by the civil war; and that it was accompanied by a marked enhance-

* Ce qu'il y a de particulier dans cette conférence, c'est qu'on y cite beaucoup plus les pères de l'église, que n'ont accoutumé de faire les Protestans de deça la mer. Comme l'église Anglicane a une vénération toute particulière pour l'antiquité, c'est par là que les Catholiques Romains l'attaquent ordinairement. Bibl. Univ. i. 336. Laud, as well as Andrews, maintained "that the true and real body of Christ is in that blessed sacrament." Conference with Fisher, p. 299. (edit. 1639.) And afterwards, "for the church of England, nothing is more plain than that it believes and teaches the true and real presence of Christ in the eucharist." Nothing is more plain than the contrary, as Hall, who belonged to a different school of theology, though the friend of Laud, has in equivalent words observed. Hall's works (Pratt's edition), vol. ix. p. 374.

ment of religious ceremonies, as well as by a considerable approximation to several doctrines and usages of the Romanists.

CHAP. II.

Defections to the Catholic church.

11. The progress of the latter church for the first thirty years of the present century was as striking and uninterrupted as it had been in the final period of the sixteenth. Victory crowned its banners on every side. The signal defeats of the elector Palatine and the king of Denmark, the reduction of Rochelle, displayed an evident superiority in the ultimate argument to which the Protestants had been driven, and which silences every other; while a rigid system of exclusion from court favour and of civil discouragement, or even of banishment, and suppression of public worship, as in the Austrian dominions, brought round the wavering and flexible to acquiesce with apparent willingness in a despotism they could neither resist nor escape. The nobility, both in France and Germany, who in the last age had been the first to embrace a new faith, became afterwards the first to desert it. Many also of the learned and able Protestants gave evidence of the jeopardy of that cause by their conversion. It is not, however, just to infer that they were merely influenced by this apprehension. Two other causes mainly operated; one, to which we have above alluded, the authority given to the traditions of the church, recorded by the writers called fathers, and with which it was found very difficult to reconcile all the Protestant creed; another, the intolerance of the reformed churches, both Lutheran and Calvinistic, which gave as little latitude as that which they had quitted.

CHAP. II.

Wavering of Casaubon,

12. The defections, from whatever cause, are numerous in the seventeenth century. But two, more eminent than any who actually renounced the Protestant religion, must be owned to have given evident signs of wavering, Casaubon and Grotius. The proofs of this are not founded merely on anecdotes which might be disputed, but on their own language.* Casaubon was staggered by the study of the fathers, in which he discovered many things, especially as to the eucharist, which he could not in any manner reconcile with the tenets of the French Hugonots.† Perron used to

* In his correspondence with Scaliger, no indications of any vacillation as to religion appear. Of the unfortunate conference between Du Plessis Mornay and Du Perron, in the presence of Henry IV., where Casaubon himself had been one of the umpires, he speaks with great regret, though with a full acknowledgment that his champion had been worsted. Quod scribis de congressu Diomedis cum Glauco, sic est omnino, ut tu judicas rectè. Vir optimus, si eum sua prudentia orbi Gallico satis explorata non defecisset, nunquam ejus certaminis aleam subiisset. After much more he concludes: Equidem in lacrymas prope adducor, quoties subit animo tristissima illius diei species, cum de ingenua nobilitate, de excellenti ingenio, de ipsa denique veritate pompaticè adeo vidi triumphatum. Epist. 214. (Oct. 1600.) See also a letter to Heinsius on the same subject. Casaub. Epist. 809. In a letter to Perron himself, in 1604, he professed to adhere to Scripture alone, against those who vetustatis auctoritatem pro ratione obtendunt. Epist. 417. A change however came gradually over his mind, and he grew fascinated by this very authority of antiquity. In 1609 he had, by the king's command, a conference on religion with Du Perron, but very reluctantly, and, as his biographer owns, quibusdam visus est quodammodo cespitasse. Casaubon was, for several reasons, no match in such a disputation for Perron. In the first place, he was poor and weak, and the other powerful, which is a reason that might dispense with our giving any others; but secondly, he had less learning in the fathers; and thirdly, he was entangled by deference for these same fathers; finally, he was not a man of as much acuteness and eloquence as his antagonist. The issue of battle does not follow the better cause, but the sharper sword, especially when there is so much *ignoratio elenchi* as in this case.

† Perron continued to persecute Casaubon with argument, whenever he met him in the king's library. Je vous confesse (the latter told Wytenbogart) qu'il m'a donné beaucoup des scrupules qui me restent, et auxquels je ne scai pas bien ré-

assail him with arguments he could not parry. If we may believe this cardinal, he was on the point of declaring publicly his conversion before he

CHAP. II.

pondre . . . il me fache de rougir. L'escapade que je prens est que je n'y puis répondre, mais que j'y penserai. Casauboni Vita (ad edit. Epistolarum, 1709.). And in writing to the same Wytenbogart, Jan. 1610, we find similar signs of wavering. Me, ne quid dissimulem, hæc tanta diversitas a fide veteris ecclesiæ non parum turbat. Ne de aliis dicam, in re sacramentaria a majoribus discessit Lutherus, a Luthero Zuinglius, ab utroque Calvinus, a Calvino qui postea scripserunt. Nam constat mihi ac certissimum est, doctrinam Calvini de sacra eucharistia longe aliam esse ab ea quæ in libro observandi viri Molinæi nostri continetur, et quæ vulgo in ecclesiis nostris auditur. Itaque Molinæum qui oppugnant, Calvinum illi non minus objiciunt, quam aliquem è veteribus ecclesiæ doctoribus. Si sic pergimus, quis tandem erit exitus? Jam quod idem Molinæus, omnes veterum libros suæ doctrinæ contrarios respuit, ut ὑποβολιμαιους, cui mediocriter docto fidem faciet? Falsus illi Cyrillus, Hierosolymorum episcopus; falsus Gregorius Nyssenus, falsus Ambrosius, falsi omnes. Mihi liquet falli ipsum, et illa scripta esse verissima, quæ ille pronuntiat ψευδεπιγραφα. Ep. 670. See also Epist. 1043, written from Paris in the same year. He came now to England, and to his great satisfaction found the church and its prelates exactly what he would wish. Illud solatio mihi est, quod in hoc regno speciem agnosco veteris ecclesiæ, quam ex patrum scriptis didici. Adde quod episcopis ὁσημεραι συνδιαγω doctissimis, sapientissimis, ευσεβεστατοις, et quod novum mihi est, priscæ ecclesiæ amantissimis. (Lond. 1611.) Ep. 703. His letters are full of similar language. See 743. 744. 772., &c. He combined this inordinate respect for authority with its natural concomitant, a desire to restrain free inquiry. Though his patristic lore should have made him not unfavourable to the Arminians, he writes to Bertius, one of their number, against the liberty of conscience they required. Illa quam passim celebras, prophetandi libertas, bonis et piis hujus ecclesiæ viris mirum in modum suspecta res est et odiosa. Nemo enim dubitat de pietate Christiana actum esse inter vos, si quod videris agere, illustrissimis ordinibus fuerit semel persuasum, ut liberum unicuique esse velint, via regia relicta semitam ex animi libidine sibi aliisque aperire. Atqui veritas, ut scis, in omnibus rebus scientiis et disciplinis unica est, et το φωνειν ταυτο inter ecclesiæ veræ notas, fateantur omnes, non est postrema. Ut nulli esse dubium possit, quin tot πολυσχιδεις semitæ totidem sint errorum diverticula. Quod olim de politicis rebus prudentissimi philosophorum dixerunt, id mihi videtur multo etiam magis in ecclesiasticis locum habere, την αγαν ελευθεριαν εις δουλειαν εξ αναγκης τελευτᾶν, et πασαν τυραννιδα αναρχιας esse κρειττην [sic !] et optabiliorem. . . . Ego qui inter pontificios diu sum in patria mea versatus, hoc tibi possum affirmare, nulla re magis stabiliri την τυραννιδα του χξζ, quam dissentionibus nostris et dissidiis.

CHAP. II.

accepted the invitation of James I. to England; and even while in England he promoted the Catholic cause more than the world was aware.* This is more than we can readily believe; and we know that he was engaged both in maintaining the temporal rights of the crown against the school of Bellarmin, and in writing animadversions on the ecclesiastical annals of Baronius. But this opposition to the extreme line of the ultra-montanists might be well compatible with a tendency towards much that the reformers had denounced. It seemed in truth to disguise the corruptions of the Catholic church by rendering the controversy almost what we might call personal; as if Rome alone, either by usurping the headship of the church, which might or might not have bad consequences, or by its encroachments on the civil power, which were

Meric Casaubon's "Pietas contra Maledicos Patrii Nominis ac Religionis Hostes," is an elaborate vindication of his father against all charges alleged by his adversaries. The only one that presses is that of wavering in religion. And here Meric candidly owns that his father had been shaken by Perron about 1610. (See this tract subjoined to Almeloveen's edition of the Epistles, p. 89.) But afterwards, by dint of theological study, he got rid of the scruples the cardinal had infused into him, and became a Protestant of the new Anglican school, admiring the first six centuries, and especially the period after Constantine: Hoc sæculum cum duobus sequentibus ακμη της εκκλησιας, flos ipse ecclesiæ et ætas illius aurea queat nuncupari. Prolegomena in Exercitationes in Baronium. His friend Scaliger had very different notions of the fathers. The fathers, says he, in his blunt way, are very ignorant, know nothing of Hebrew, and teach us little in theology. Their interpretations of scripture are strangely perverse. Even Polycarp, who was a disciple of the apostles, is full of errors. It will not do to say that, because they were near the apostolic age, they are never wrong. Scaligerana Secunda. Le Clerc has some good remarks on the deference shown by Casaubon to the language held by the fathers about the eucharist, which shook his Protestantism. Bibl. Choisie, xix. 230.

* Perroniana. Grot. Epist. pag. 939.

only maintained by a party, were the sole object of that religious opposition, which had divided one half of Europe from the other. Yet if Casaubon, as he had much inclination to do, being on ill terms with some in England, and disliking the country *, had returned to France, it seems probable that he would not long have continued in what, according to the principles he had adopted, would appear a schismatical communion.

CHAP. II.

and of Grotius.

13. Grotius was from the time of his turning his mind to theology, almost as much influenced as Casaubon by primitive authority, and began, even in 1614, to commend the Anglican church for the respect it showed, very unlike the rest of the re-

* Several of his letters attest his desire of returning. He wrote to Thuanus imploring his recommendation to the queen regent. But he had given much offence by writing against Baronius, and had very little chance of an indemnity for his prebend of Canterbury, if he had given that up on leaving England. This country, however, though he sometimes calls it μακαρων νησος, did not suit his disposition. He was never on good terms with Savile, the most presumptuous of the learned, according to him, and most scornful, whom he accused of setting on Montague to anticipate his animadversions on Baronius, with some suspicion, on Casaubon's part, of stealing from him. Ep. 794. 848, 849. But he seems himself to have become generally unpopular, if we may trust his own account. Ego mores Anglorum non capio. Quoscunque habui notos priusquam huc venirem, jam ego illis sum ignotus, verè peregrinus, barbarus; nemo illorum me vel verbulo appellat; *appellatus silet.* Hoc quid sit, non scio. Hic —— [Henricus Wotton] vir doctissimus ante annos viginti mecum Genevæ vixit, et ex eo tempore literis amicitiam coluimus. Postquam ego e Galliis, ille Venetiis huc convenimus, desii esse illi notus; meæ quoque epistolæ responsum dedit nullum; an sit daturus nescio. Ep. 841. It seems difficult to account for so marked a treatment of Casaubon, except on the supposition that he was thought to pursue a course unfavourable to the Protestant interest. He charges the English with despising every one but themselves; and ascribes this to the vast wealth of their universities; a very discreditable source of pride in our ancestors, if so it were. But Casaubon's philological and critical skill passed for little in this country, where it was not known enough to be envied. In mere ecclesiastical learning he was behind some English scholars

CHAP. II.

formed, to that standard.* But the ill-usage he sustained at the hands of those who boasted their independence of papal tyranny, the caresses of the Gallican clergy after he had fixed his residence at Paris, the growing dissensions and virulence of the Protestants, the choice that seemed alone to be left in their communion, between a fanatical anarchy, disintegrating every thing like a church on the one hand, and a domination of bigoted and vulgar ecclesiastics on the other, made him gradually less and less averse to the comprehensive and majestic unity of the Catholic hierarchy, and more and more willing to concede some point of uncertain doctine, or some form of ambiguous expressive. This is abundantly perceived, and has often been pointed out, in his Annotations on the Consultation of Cassander*, written in 1641, in his Ani-

* Casaubon himself hailed Grotius as in the right path. In hodiernis contentionibus in negotio religionis et doctè et piè judicat, et in veneratione antiquitatis cum iis sentit, qui optimè sentiunt. Epist. 883. See also 772., which is addressed to him. This high respect for the fathers and for the authority of the primitive church grew strongly upon him, and the more because he found they were hostile to the Calvinistic scheme. He was quite delighted at finding Jerome and Chrysostom on his side. Epist. 29. (1614.) In the next year, writing to Vossius, he goes a great length. Cæterum ego reformatarum ecclesiarum miseriam in hoc maximè deploro, quod cum symbola condere catholicæ sit ecclesiæ, ipsis inter se nunquam cam in rem convenire sit datum, atque interim libelli apologetici ex re nata scripti ad imperatorem, reges, principes, aut ut in concilio œcumenico exhiberentur, trahi cœperint in usum longè alienum. Quid enim magis est alienum ab unitate catholica quam quod diversis in regionibus pastores diversa populo tradere coguntur? Quam mirata fuisset hoc prodigium pia antiquitas! Sed hæc aliaque multa mussitanda sunt nobis ob iniquitatem temporum. Epist. 66. He was at this time, as he continued till near the end of his life, when he moved on farther, highly partial to the Anglican church. He was, however, too Erastian for the English bishops of the reign of James, as appears by a letter addressed to him by Overall, who objected to his giving, in his treatise De Imperio circa Sacra, a definitive power in con-

madversions on Rivet, who had censured the former treatise as inclining to Popery, in the Votum pro

troversiis of faith to the civil magistrate, and to his putting episcopacy among non-essentials, which the bishops held to be of divine right. Grotius adhered to his opinion, that episcopacy was not commanded as a perpetual institution, and thought, at that time, that there was no other distinction between bishops and priests than of precedency. Nusquam meminit, he says in one place, Clemens Romanus exsortis illius episcoporum auctoritatis, quæ ecclesiæ consuetudine post Marci mortem Alexandriæ, atque eo exemplo alibi, introduci cœpit, sed planè ut Paulus Apostolus, ostendit ecclesias communi presbyterorum, qui iidem omnes et episcopi ipsi Pauloque dicuntur, consilio fuisse gubernatas. Even in his latter writings he seems never to have embraced the notions of some Anglican divines on this subject, but contents himself, in his remarks on Cassander, who had said, singularly as it may be thought, Convenit *inter omnes* olim Apostolorum ætate inter episcopos et presbyteros discrimen nullum fuisse, sed postmodum ordinis servandi et schismatis evitandi causa episcopum presbyteris fuisse præpositum, with observing, Episcopi sunt presbyterorum principes; et ista *προστασια* (præsidentia) à Christo præmonstrata est in Petro, ab Apostolis vero, ubicunque fieri poterat, constituta, et a Spiritu Sancto comprobata in Apocalypsi. Op. Theolog. iv. 579. 621.

But to return from this digression to the more immediate purpose. Grotius for several years continued in this insulated state, neither approving of the Reformation nor the church of Rome. He wrote in 1622 to Episcopius against those whom he called Cassandrians, Qui etiam plerosque Romanæ ecclesiæ errores improbantibus auctores sunt, ne ab ejus communione discedant. Ep. 181. He was destined to become Cassandrian himself, or something more. The infallibility of the church was still no doctrine of his. At illa auctoritas ecclesiæ *αναμαρτητου*, quam ecclesiæ, et quidem suæ, Romanenses ascribunt, cum naturali ratione non sit evidens, nam ipsi fatentur Judaicam ecclesiam id privilegium non habuisse, sequitur ut adversus negantes probari debeat ex sacris literis. Epist. secunda series, p. 761. (1620.) And again: Quæ scribit pater de restituendis rebus in eum statum, qui ante concilium Tridentinum fuerat, esset quidem hoc permultum; sed transubstantiatio et ei respondens adoratio pridem Lateranensi concilio definita est, et invocatio peculiaris sanctorum pridem in omnes liturgias recepta. p. 772. (1623.)

Grotius passed most of his latter years at Paris, in the honourable station of ambassador from the court of Sweden. He seems to have thought it a matter of boast that he did not live as a Protestant. See Ep. 196. The Hugonot ministers of Charenton requested him to communicate with them, which he declined, p. 854. 856. (1635.) He now was brooding over a scheme of union among Protestants: the English and Swedish churches were to unite, and to be followed by Denmark. Constituto semel aliquo tali ecclesiarum corpore, spes est subinde alios atque alios se aggregaturos. Est autem hæc res eo magis optanda protestantibus, quod quotidie multi eos deserunt et se cœtibus Romanensium addunt, non

CHAP. II.

Pace Ecclesiasticâ, and in the Rivetiani Apologetici Discussio; all which are collected in the

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alia de causa, quam quod non unum est eorum corpus, sed partes distractæ, greges segreges, propria cuique sua sacrorum communio, ingens præterea maledicendi certamen. Epist. 866. (1637.) See also p. 827. (1630.) He fancied that by such a weight of authority, grounded on the ancient church, the exercise of private judgment, on which he looked with horror, might be overruled. Nisi interpretandi sacras literas, he writes to Calixtus, libertatem cohibemus intra lineas eorum, quæ omnes illæ non sanctitate minus quam primæva vetustate venerabiles ecclesiæ ex ipsa prædicatione scripturis ubique consentiente hauserint, diuque sub crucis maximè magisterio retinuerint, nisi deinde in iis quæ liberam habuere disputationem fraterna lenitate ferre alii alios discimus, quis erit litium sæpe in factiones, deinde in bella erumpentium finis? Ep. 674. (Oct. 1636.) Qui illam optimam antiquitatem sequuntur ducem, quod te semper fecisse memini, iis non eveniet, ut multum sibi ipsis sint discolores. In Angliâ vides quam bene processerit dogmatum noxiorum repurgatio, hac maximè de causa quod qui id sanctissimum negotium procurandum suscepere nihil admiscuerunt novi, nihil sui, sed ad meliora sæcula intentam habuere oculorum aciem. Ep. 966. (1638.)

But he could not be long in perceiving that this union of Protestant churches was impossible from the very independence of their original constitution. He saw that there could be no practicable re-union except with Rome itself, nor that, except on an acknowledgment of her superiority. From the year 1640 his letters are full of sanguine hopes that this delusive vision would be realised. He still expected some concession on the other side; but, as usual, would have lowered his terms according to the pertinacity of his adversaries, if indeed they were still to be called his adversaries. He now published his famous annotations on Cassander, and the other tracts mentioned in the text, to which they gave rise. In these he defends almost every thing we deem popery, such as transubstantiation (Opera Theologica, iv. 619.), stooping to all the nonsensical evasions of a spiritual mutation of substance and the like; the authority of the pope (p. 642.), the celibacy of the clergy (p. 645.), the communion in one kind (ibid.), and in fact is less of a Protestant than Cassander. In his epistles he declares himself decidedly in favour of purgatory, as at least a probable doctrine, p. 930. In these writings he seems to have had the countenance of Richelieu. Cardinalis quin ἑνώσεως negotium in Gallia successurum sit, dubitare se negat. Epist. sec. series, p. 912. Cardinalis Ricelianus rem successuram putat. Ita certè loquitur multis. Archiepiscopus Cantuariensis pœnas dat honestissimi consilii, quod et aliis bonis sæpe evenit. p. 911. Grotius is now run away with by vanity, and fancies all will go according to his wish, showing much ignorance of the real state of things. He was left by some from whom he had entertained hopes, and thought the Dutch Arminians timid. Vossius ut video, præ metu, forte et ex Anglia sic jussus, auxilium suum mihi subtrahit. p. 908. Salmasius adhuc in consiliis fluctuat. Est in religionis rebus suæ

fourth volume of the theological works of Grotius. These treatises display an uniform and progressive

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parti addictior quam putabatur. p. 912. De Episcopio doleo; est vir magni ingenii et probus, sed nimium cupidus alendæ partis. But it is probable that he had misinterpreted some language of these great men, who contemplated with regret the course he was taking, which could be no longer a secret. De Grotii ad papam defectione, a French protestant of some eminence for learning writes, tanquam re certa, quod fama istuc distulit, verum non est. Sed non sine magno metu eum aliquid istiusmodi meditantem et conantem quotidie inviti videmus. Inter protestantes cujuslibet ordinis nomen ejus ascribi vetat, quod eos atrocius sugillavit in Appendice de Antichristo, et Annotatis ad Cassandri consultationem. Sarravii Epistolæ, p. 58. (1642.) And again he expresses his strong disapprobation of one of the later treatises. Verissimè dixit ille qui primus dixit Grotium papissare. p. 196. See also pp. 31. 53.

In 1642 Grotius had become wholly averse to the Reformation. He thought it had done more harm than good, especially by the habit of interpreting every thing on the papal side for the worse. Malos mores qui mansere corrigi æquum est. Sed an non hoc melius successurum fuerit, si quisque semet repurgans pro repurgatione aliorum preces ad Deum tulisset, et principes et episcopi correctionem desiderantes, non rupta compage, per concilia universalia in id laborassent. Dignum est de quo cogitetur. p. 938. Auratus, as he calls him, that is, D'Or, a sort of chaplain to Grotius, became a Catholic about this time. The other only says,—Quod Auratus fecit, idem fecit antehac vir doctissimus Petrus Pithœus; idem constituerat facere Casaubonus si in Gallia mansisset, affirmavit enim id inter alios etiam Cordesio. p. 939. Of Casaubon he says afterwards: Casaubonus multo saniores putabat Catholicos Galliæ quam Carentonianos. Anglos autem episcopos putabat a schismatis culpa posse absolvi. p. 940. Every successive year saw him now draw nearer to Rome. Reperio autem quicquid communiter ab ecclesia occidentali quæ Romanæ cohæret recipitur, idem reperiri apud Patres veteres Græcos et Latinos, quorum communionem retinendam esse vix quisquam neget. Si quid præter hoc est, id ad liberas doctorum opinationes pertinet; in quibus suum quis judicium sequi potest, et communionis jus non amittere. p. 958. Episcopius was for limiting articles of faith to the creed. But Grotius did not agree with this, and points out that it would not preserve uniformity. Quam multa jam sunt de sacramentis, de ecclesiarum regimine, in quibus, vel concordiæ causa, certi aliquid observari debet. Alioqui compages ecclesiæ tantopere nobis commendata retineri non potest. p. 941. It would be endless to quote every passage tending to the same result. Finally, in a letter to his brother in Holland, he expresses his hope that Wytenbogart, the respectable patriarch of Arminianism, would turn his attention to the means of restoring unity to the church. Velim D. Wytenbogardum, ubi permiserit valetudo, nisi id jam fecerit, scriptum aliquid facere de necessitate restituendæ in ecclesia unitatis, et quibus modis id fieri possit. Multi pro remedio monstrant, si necessaria a non necessariis separentur, in non necessariis sive cre-

CHAP. II.

tendency to defend the church of Rome in every thing that can be reckoned essential to her creed;

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ditu sive facto relinquatur libertas. At non minor est controversia, quæ sint necessaria, quam quæ sint vera. Indicia, aiunt, sunt in scripturis. At certè etiam circa illa loca variat interpretatio. Quare nondum video an quid sit melius, quam ea quæ ad fidem et bona opera nos ducunt retinere, ut sunt in ecclesia catholica; puto enim in iis esse quæ sunt necessaria ad salutem. In cæteris ea quæ conciliorum auctoritate, aut veterum consensu recepta sunt, interpretari eo modo quo interpretati sunt illi qui commodissimè sunt locuti, quales semper aliqui in quaque materia facile reperientur. Si quis id a se impetrare non possit, ut taceat, nec propter res de quibus certus non est, sed opinationem tantum quandam habet, turbet unitatem ecclesiæ necessariam, quæ nisi retinetur ubi est, et restituitur ubi non est, omnia ibunt in pejus, p. 960. (Nov. 1643.) Wytenbogard replied very well: Si ita se res habet, ut indicia necessariorum et non necessariorum in scriptura reperiri nequeant, sed quæri debeant in auctoritate conciliorum aut veterum consensu, eo modo quo interpretati sunt illi, qui commodissimè locuti sunt, prout Excellentia tua videtur existimare, nescio an viginti quinque anni, etiamsi illi mihi adhuc restarent, omnesque exigui ingenii corporisque mei vires in mea essent potestate, sufficerent ut maturo cum judicio perlegam et expendam omnia quæ eo pertinent. This letter is in the Epistolæ præstantium et eruditorum virorum edited by Limborch in 1683, p. 826. And Grotius's answer is in the same collection. It is that of a man who throws off a mask he had reluctantly worn. There was in fact no other means of repelling Wytenbogard's just observation on the moral impossibility of tracing for ourselves the doctrine of the Catholic church as an historical inquiry. Grotius refers him to a visible standard. Quare considerandum est, an non facilius et æquius sit, quoniam doctrina de gratia, de libero arbitrio, necessitate fidei bonorumque operum obtinuit in ecclesia quæ pro se habet universale regimen et ordinem successionis, privatos se in aliis accommodare, pacis causa, iis quæ universaliter sunt recepta, sive ea aptissimis explicationibus recipiendo, sive tacendo, quam corpus illud catholicum ecclesiæ se in articulo tolerantiæ accommodare debere uniuscujusque considerationibus et placitis. Exempli gratiâ: Catholica ecclesia nemini præscribit ut precetur pro mortuis, aut opem precum sanctorum vita hac defunctorum imploret; solummodo requirit, ne quis morem adeo antiquum et generalem condemnet. The church does, in fact, rather more than he insinuates, though less than Protestants generally fancy.

I have trespassed on the patience of the general reader in this very long note, which may be thought a superfluous digression in a work of mere literature. But the epistles of Grotius are not much read; nor are they in many private libraries. The index is also very indifferent, so that without the trouble I have taken of going over the volume, it might be difficult to find these curious passages. I ought to mention that Burigny has given references to most of them, but with few quotations. Le Clerc, in the first volume of the Bibliothèque Universelle, reviewing the epistles of Gro-

and in fact, he will be found to go farther in this direction than Cassander.

14. But if any one could put a different interpretation on these works, which would require a large measure of prejudice, the epistles of Grotius afford such evidence of his secession from the Pro-

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tius, slides very gently over his bias towards popery; and I have met with well-informed persons in England, who had no conception of the lengths to which this had led him. It is of far more importance, and the best apology I can offer for so prolix a note, to perceive by what gradual, but, as I think, necessary steps, he was drawn onward by his excessive respect for antiquity, and by his exaggerated notions of Catholic unity, preferring at last to err with the many, than to be right with the few. If Grotius had learned to look the hydra schism in the face, he would have had less fear of its many heads, and at least would have dreaded to cut them off at the neck, lest the source of life should be in one of them.

That Grotius really thought as the fathers of Trent thought upon all points in dispute cannot be supposed. It was not in the power of a man of his learning and thoughtfulness to divest himself of his own judgment, unless he had absolutely subjugated his reason to religious awe, which was far from being the case. His aim was to search for subtle interpretations, by which he might profess to believe the words of the church, though conscious that his sense was not that of the imposers. It is needless to say that this is not very ingenuous; and even if it could be justifiable relatively to the person, would be an abandonment of the multitude to any superstition and delusion which might be put upon them. Via ad pacem expeditissima mihi videtur, si doctrina, communi consensu recepta, commodè explicetur, mores, sanæ doctrinæ adversantes, quantum fieri potest, tollantur, et in rebus mediis accommodet se pars ingenio totius. Epist. 1524. Peace was his main object; if toleration had been as well understood as it was afterwards, he would perhaps have compromised less.

Baxter having published a Treatise of the Grotian Religion, wherein he imputed to Grotius this inclination towards the church of Rome, Archbishop Bramhall replied, after the Restoration, with a vindication of Grotius, in which he does not say much to the purpose, and seems ignorant of the case. The epistles indeed were not then published.

Besides the passages in these epistles above quoted, the reader who wishes to follow this up may consult Epist. 1108, 1460, 1561, 1570, 1706 of the first series; and in the second series, p. 875, 896, 940, 943, 958, 960, 975. But there are also many to which I have made no reference. I do not quote authorities for the design of Grotius to have declared himself a convert, if he had lived to return to France, though they are easily found; because the testimony of his writings is far stronger than any anecdote.

CHAP. II. testant side, as no reasonable understanding can reject. These are contained in a large folio volume, published in 1687, and amount to 1766 of one series, and 744 of another. I have quoted the former, for distinction's sake, by the number, and the latter by the page. Few, we may presume, have taken the pains to go through them, in order to extract all the passages that bear upon this subject. It will be found that he began, as I have just said, by extolling the authority of the Catholic or universal church, and its exclusive right to establish creeds of path. He some time afterwards ceased to frequent the Protestant worship, but long kept his middle path, and thought it enough to inveigh against the Jesuits and the exorbitancies of the see of Rome. But his reverence for the writers of the fourth and fifth centuries grew continually stronger; he learned to protest against the privilege, claimed by the reformers, of interpreting Scripture otherwise than the consent of the ancients had warranted; visions, first of an union between the Lutheran and English churches, and then of one with Rome itself, floated before his eyes; he sought religious peace with the latter, as men seek it in opposition to civil government, by the redress of grievances and the subsequent restoration of obedience. But in proportion as he perceived how little of concession was to be obtained, he grew himself more ready to concede; and though at one time he seems to deny the infallibility of the church, and at another would not have been content with placing all things in the state they were before the council of Trent, he came ulti-

mately to think such a favourable sense might be put on all the Tridentine decrees, as to render them compatible with the Confession of Augsburg.

15. From the year 1640 his course seems to have been accelerated; he intimates no disapprobation of those who went over to Rome; he found, as he tells us, that whatever was generally received in the church of Rome, had the authority of those Greek and Latin fathers, whose communion no one would have refused; and at length, in a remarkable letter to Wytenbogart, bearing date in 1644, he puts it as worthy to be considered, whether it would not be more reasonable for private men who find the most essential doctrines in a church of an universal hierarchy and a legitimate succession, to wave their differences with it for the sake of peace, by putting the best interpretations they can, only keeping silence on their own opinions, than that the catholic church should accommodate itself to the separate judgment of such men. Grotius had already ceased to speak of the Arminians as if he was one of themselves, though with much respect for some of their leaders.

16. Upon a dispassionate examination of all these testimonies, we can hardly deem it an uncertain question whether Grotius, if his life had been prolonged, would have taken the easy leap that still remained; and there is some positive evidence of his design to do so. But dying on a journey and in a protestant country, this avowed declaration was never made. Fortunately indeed for his glory, since his new friends would speedily have put his conversion to the proof, and his latter

years might have been spent, like those of Lipsius, in defending legendary miracles, or in waging war against the honoured dead of the reformation. He did not sufficiently remember that a silent neutrality is never indulged to a suspicious proselyte.

17. It appears to me, nevertheless, that Grotius was very far from having truly subjected his understanding to the church of Rome. The whole bent of his mind was to effect an exterior union among Christians; and for this end he did not hesitate to recommend equivocal senses of words, convenient explanations, and respectful silence. Listening attentively, if I may be allowed such a metaphor, we hear the chaunt of the Æsculapian cock in all he has written for the catholic church. He first took up his reverence for antiquity, because he found antiquity unfavourable to the doctrine of Calvin. His antipathy to this reformer and to his followers led him on to an admiration of the episcopal succession, the organized hierarchy, the ceremonial and liturgical institutions, the high notions of sacramental rites, which he found in the ancient church, and which Luther and Zuingle had cast away. He became imbued with the notion of unity as essential to the catholic church; but he never seems to have gone the length of abandoning his own judgment, or of asserting any positive infallibility to the decrees of man. For it is manifest that, if the councils of Nice or of Trent were truly inspired, it would be our business to inquire what they meant themselves, not to put the most convenient interpret-

ations, nor to search out for some author or another who may have strained their language to our own opinion. The precedent of Grotius, therefore, will not serve those who endeavour to bind the reason of the enlightened part of mankind, which he respected like his own. Two predominant ideas seem to have swayed the mind of this great man in the very gradual transition we have indicated; one, his extreme reverence for antiquity and for the consent of the catholic church; the other, his Erastian principles as to the authority of the civil magistrate in matters of religion. Both conspired to give him an abhorrence of the 'liberty of prophesying,' the right of private men to promulgate tenets inconsistent with the established faith. In friendly conversation or correspondence, even perhaps, with due reserve, in Latin writings, much might be indulged to the learned; room was to be found for an Erasmus and a Cassander; or, if they would themselves consent, for an Episcopius, and a Wytenbogart, at least for a Montagu and a Laud; but no pretext was ever to justify a separation. The scheme of Grotius is, in a modified degree, much the same as that of Hobbes.

Calixtus.

18. In the Lutheran church we find an eminent contemporary of Grotius, who may be reckoned his counterpart in the motives which influenced him to seek for an entire union of religious parties, though resembling him far more in his earlier opinions, than in those to which he ultimately arrived. This was George Calixtus, of the university of Helmstadt, a theologian the most tole-

CHAP. II.

rant, mild and catholic in his spirit, whom the Confession of Augsburg had known since Melanchthon. This university indeed, which had never subscribed the Form of Concord, was already distinguished by freedom of inquiry, and its natural concomitant, a large and liberal spirit. But in his own church generally, Calixtus found as rigid schemes of orthodoxy, and perhaps a more invidious scrutiny into the recesses of private opinion, than in that of Rome, with a less extensive basis of authority. The dream of good men in this age, the reunion of Christian churches in a common faith, and meanwhile the tolerance of differences, were ever the aim of Calixtus. But he fell, like the Anglican divines, into high notions of primitive tradition, placing, according to Eichhorn and Mosheim, the unanimity of the first six centuries by the side of Scripture itself. He was assailed by the adherents of the Form of Concord with aggravated virulence and vulgarity; he was accused of being a papist and a Calvinist, reproaches equally odious in their eyes, and therefore fit to be heaped on his head; the inconsistency of calumnies being no good reason with bigots against uttering them.*

His attempts at concord.

19. In a treatise, published long after his death, in 1697, De tolerantia Reformatorum circa quæstiones inter ipsos et Augustanam confessionem professos controversas consultatio, it is his object to prove that the Calvinists held no such tenets as should exclude them from Christian communion. He does not deny or extenuate the reality of their

* Eichhorn, vol. vi. part ii. p. 20. Mosheim. Biogr. Univ.

differences from the Confession of Augsburg. The Lutherans, though many of them, he says, had formerly maintained the absolute decrees of predestination, were now come round to the doctrine of the first four centuries.* And he admits that the Calvinists, whatever phrases they may use, do not believe a true and substantial presence in the Eucharist.† But neither of these errors, if such they are, he takes to be fundamental. In a shorter and more valuable treatise, entitled Desiderium et studium concordiæ ecclesiasticæ, Calixtus proposes some excellent rules for allaying religious heats. But he leans far too much towards the authority of tradition. Every church, he says, which affirms what others deny, is bound to prove its affirmation; first by Scripture, in which whatever is contained must be out of con-

CHAP. II.

* Nostri e quibus olim multi ibidem absolutum decretum approbarunt, paulatim ad sententiam primorum quatuor sæculorum, nempe decretum juxta præscientiam factum, receperunt. Qua in re multum egregie laboravit Ægidius Hunnius. Difficile autem est hanc sententiam ita proponere, ne quid Pelagianismo habere affine videatur. p. 14.

† Si tamen non tam quid loquantur quam quid sentiant attendimus, certum est eos veri corporis et sanguinis secundum substantiam acceptorum præsentiam non admittere. Rectius autem fuerit utramque partem simpliciter et ingenuè, quod sentit, profiteri, quam alteram alteri ambiguis loquendi formulis imponere. Qualem conciliandi rationem inierunt olim Philippus et Bucerus, nempe ut præscriberentur formulæ, quarum verba utraque pars amplecteretur, sed singulæ suo sensu acciperent ac interpretarentur. Quem conatum, quamvis ex pio eoque ingente concordiæ desiderio et studio profectum, nulla successûs felicitas excepit. p. 70. This observation is very just in the abstract; but in the early period of the reformation, there were strong reasons for evading points of difference, in the hope that the truth would silently prevail in the course of time. We, however, who come later, are to follow the advice of Calixtus, and in judging as well as we can, of the opinions of men, must not altogether regard their words. Upon no theological controversy, probably, has there been so much of studied ambiguity as on that of the eucharist. Calixtus passes a similar censure on the equivocations of some great men of the preceding century in his other treatise mentioned in the text.

CHAP. II.

troversy, and secondly, (as Scripture bears witness to the church that it is the pillar and foundation of truth, and especially the primitive church which is called that of the saints and martyrs,) by the unanimous consent of the ancient church, above all, where the debate is among learned men. The agreement of the church is therefore a sufficient evidence of Christian doctrine, not that of individual writers, who are to be regarded rather so far as they testify the catholic doctrine, than as they propound their own.* This deference to an imaginary perfection in the church of the fourth or fifth century must have given a great advantage to that of Rome, which is not always weak on such ground, and doubtless serves to account for those frequent desertions to her banner, especially in persons of very high rank, which afterwards occurred in Germany.

High-church party in England.

20. The tenets of some of those who have been called High-church Anglicans may in themselves be little different from those of Grotius and Calixtus. But the spirit in which they have been

* Consensu itaque primæ ecclesiæ ex symbolis et scriptis manifesto doctrina Christiana rectè confirmatur. Intelligimus autem doctrinam fundamentalem et necessariam, non quasvis appendices et quæstiones, aut etiam quorundam scripturæ locorum interpretationes. De talibus enim unanimis et universalis consensus non poterit erui vel proferri. Et magis apud plerosque spectandum est, quid tanquam communem ecclesiæ sententiam proponunt, quam quomodo eam confirmant aut demonstrant. p. 85. I have not observed in the little I know of Calixtus, any proof of his inclination towards the church of Rome.

Gerard Vossius, as Episcopius wrote to Vorstius in 1615, declared in his inaugural lecture as professor of theology, his determination to follow the consent of antiquity, in explicatione Scripturarum et controversiarum diremtionibus diligenter examinare et expendere catholicum et antiquissimum consensum, cum sine dubio illud quod a pluribus et antiquissimis dictum est, verissimum sit. Epist. Virorum præstantium, p. 6.

conceived is altogether opposite. The one is exclusive, intolerant, severe, dogmatical, insisting on uniformity of faith as well as of exterior observances; the other catholic in outward profession, charitable in sentiment, and in fact one mode, though a mode as imprudent as it was oblique, in which the latitudinarian principle was manifested. The language both of Grotius and Calixtus bears this out: and this ought closely to be observed, lest we confound the real laxity of one school with the rigid orthodoxy of the other. One had it in view to reconcile discordant communions by mutual concession, and either by such explication of contrarieties as might make them appear less incompatible with outward unity, or by an avowed tolerance of their profession within the church; the other would permit nothing but submission to its own authority; it loved to multiply rather than to extinguish the risks of dissent, in order to crush it more effectually; the one was a pacific negotiator, the other a conquering tyrant.

Daillé on the right use of the fathers.

21. It was justly alarming to sincere protestants, that so many brilliant ornaments of their party should either desert to the hostile side, or do their own so much injury by taking up untenable ground.* Nothing, it appeared to reflecting men,

* It was a poor consolation for so many losses, that the famous Antonio de Dominis, archbishop of Spoleto, came over to England, and by his books de Republica Ecclesiastica, as well as by his conversation, seemed an undisguised enemy to the church of Rome. The object of his work is to prove that the pope has no superiority over other bishops. James gave de Dominis the deanery of Windsor and a living; but whether he, strictly speaking, belonged to the church of England, I do not remember to have read. Preferments were bestowed irregularly in that age. He returned, however,

CHAP. II.

could be trusted to the argument from antiquity; whatever was gained in the controversy on a few points was lost upon those of the first importance. It was become the only secure course to overthrow the tribunal. Daillé, himself one of the most learned in this patristic erudition whom the French reformed church possessed, was the first who boldly attacked the new school of historical theology in their own strong hold, not occupying their fortress, but razing it to the ground. The design of his celebrated Treatise concerning the right use of the Fathers, published in 1628, is, in his own words, to show, "that they cannot be the judges of the controversies in religion at this day between the papist and the protestant," nor, by parity of reasoning, of many others; "1. Because it is, if not an impossible, yet at least a very difficult thing to find out what their sense hath been touching the same. 2. Because that their sense and judgment of these things, supposing it to be certainly and clearly understood, not being infallible, and without all danger of error, cannot carry with it a sufficient authority for the satisfying the understanding."

22. The arguments adduced by Daillé in support of the former of these two positions, and which occupy the first book of the treatise, are drawn from the paucity of early Christian writers,

to the ancient fold; but did not avoid suspicion, being thrown into prison at Rome; and after his death, the imputations of heresy against him so much increased that his body was dug up and burned. Neither party has been ambitious to claim this vain and insincere, though clever prelate.

from the nature of the subjects treated by them, having little relation to the present controversies, from the suspicions of forgery and interpolation affecting many of their works, the difficulty of understanding their idioms and figurative expressions, the habit of some of the fathers to say what they did not believe, their changes of mind, the peculiar and individual opinions of some among them, affording little evidence of the doctrine of the church; finally, the probability that many who differed from those called the fathers, and whose writings have not descended to us, may have been of as good authority as themselves.

23. In the second book, which in fact has been very much anticipated in the first, he shows that neither the testimony nor the doctrine of the fathers is infallible (by which word he must be understood to mean that it raises but a slight presumption of truth), proving this by their errors and contradictions. Thus he concludes that, though their negative authority is considerable, since they cannot be presumed ignorant of any material doctrine of religion, we are to be very slow in drawing affirmative propositions from their writings, and much more so in relying upon them as undoubted verities.

24. It has been said of this treatise on the right use of the fathers, that its author had pretty well proved they were of no use at all. This indeed is by no means the case; but it has certainly diminished not only the deference which many have been wont to pay to the opinion of the primitive writers, but what is still more contended

CHAP. II.

for, the value of their testimony, whether as to matters of fact, or as to the prevailing doctrines of the Christian church. Nothing can be more certain, though in the warmth of controversy men are apt to disregard it, than that a witness, who deposes in any one case what can be disproved, is not entitled to belief in other assertions which we have no means of confuting, unless it be shown that the circumstances of his evidence render it more trust-worthy in these points than we have found it before. Hence such writers as Justin and Irenæus ought not, except with great precaution, to be quoted in proof at all, or at least with confidence; their falsehood, not probably wilful, in assertions that have been brought to a test rendering their testimony very precarious upon any other points. Daillé, it may be added, uses some circumspection, as the times, if not his own disposition, required in handling this subject, keeping chiefly in view the controversies between the Romish and protestant churches; nor does he ever indulge in that tone of banter or acrimony which we find in Whitby, Barbeyrac, Jortin, and Middleton; and which must be condemned by every one who reflects that many of these writers exposed their lives, and some actually lost them, in the maintenance and propagation of Christianity.

Chillingworth's Religion of Protestants.

25. This well-timed and important book met with a good reception from some in England, though it must have been very uncongenial to the ruling party. It was extolled and partly translated by Lord Falkland; and his two distinguished friends,

Chillingworth and Hales, found in it the materials of their own bold revolt against church authority. They were both Arminians, and, especially the former, averse in all respects to the Puritan school. But like Episcopius, they scorned to rely, as on these points they might have done, on what they deemed so precarious and inconclusive as the sentiments of the fathers. Chillingworth, as is well known, had been induced to embrace the Romish religion, on the usual ground that a succession of infallible pastors, that is, a collective hierarchy, by adhering to whom alone we could be secure from error, was to be found in that church. He returned again to the protestant religion on being convinced that no such infallible society could be found. And a Jesuit, by name Knott, having written a book to prove that unrepenting protestants could not be saved, Chillingworth published, in 1637, his famous answer, The Religion of Protestants a safe Way to Salvation. In this he closely tracks the steps of his adversary, replying to every paragraph and almost every sentence.

Character of this work.

26. Knott is by no means a despicable writer; he is concise, polished, and places in an advantageous light the great leading arguments of his church. Chillingworth, with a more diffuse and less elegant style, is greatly superior in impetuosity and warmth. In his long parenthetical periods, as in those of other old English writers, in his copiousness, which is never empty or tautological, there is an inartificial eloquence springing from strength of intellect and sincerity of feeling, that cannot fail to impress the reader. But his chief

CHAP. II.

excellence is the close reasoning, which avoids every dangerous admission and yields to no ambiguousness of language. He perceived and maintained with great courage, considering the times in which he wrote and the temper of those he was not unwilling to keep as friends, his favourite tenet, that all things necessary to be believed are clearly laid down in Scripture. Of tradition, which many of his contemporary protestants were becoming as prone to magnify as their opponents, he spoke very slightingly; not denying of course a maxim often quoted from Vincentius Lirinensis, that a tradition strictly universal and aboriginal must be founded in truth, but being assured that no such could be shown; and that what came nearest, both in antiquity and in evidence of catholic reception, to the name of apostolical, were doctrines and usages rejected alike by all denominations of the church in modern times.* It will be readily conceived, that his method of

* "If there were any thing unwritten which had come down to us with as full and universal a tradition as the unquestioned books of canonical Scripture, that thing should I believe as well as the Scripture; but I have long sought for some such thing, and yet I am to seek · nay, I am confident no one point in controversy between papists and protestants can go in upon half so fair cards, for to gain the esteem of an apostolic tradition, as those things which are now decried on all hands; I mean the opinion of the Chiliasts and the communicating infants." Chap. 3. § 82. He dilates upon this insecurity of tradition in some detached papers, subjoined to the best editions of his work. Chillingworth might have added an instance if he had been writing against Romanizing Anglicans. Nothing can come so close to the foolish rule above mentioned, as the observation of celibacy by bishops and priests, not being married before their ordination, which, till the time of Luther, was, as far as we have reason to believe, universal in the church; no one, at least, has ever alleged an instance or authority to the contrary. Yet those who talk most of the rule of Vincentius Lirinensis set aside without compunction the only case in which we can truly say that it may with some show of probability be applied. Omnia vincit amor.

dealing with the controversy is very different from that of Laud in his treatise against Fisher; wherein we meet chiefly with disputes on passages in the fathers, as to which, especially when they are not quoted at length, it is impossible that any reader can determine for himself. The work of Chillingworth may at least be understood and appreciated without reference to any other; the condition, perhaps, of real superiority in all productions of the mind.

27. Chillingworth was however a man versed in patristical learning, by no means less so, probably, than Laud. But he had found so much uncertainty about this course of theological doctrine, seducing as it generally is to the learned, "fathers," as he expresses it, "being set against fathers, and councils against councils," that he declares, in a well-known passage, the Bible exclusively to be the religion of protestants; and each man's own reason to be, as from the general tenor of his volume it appears that he held it, the interpreter of the Bible.* It was a natural consequence that he was a strenuous advocate not so much for toleration of separate churches, as for such an "ordering of the public service of God, that all who believe the Scripture and live according to it, might without

* This must always be understood with the condition, that the reason itself shall be competently enlightened: if Chillingworth meant more than this, he carried his principle too far, as others have done. The case is parallel in jurisprudence, medicine, mechanics, and every human science: any one man, primâ facie, may be a competent judge, but all men are not so. It is hard to prove that there is any different rule for theology; but parties will always contend for extremes; for the rights of bigots to think for others, and the rights of fools to think for themselves.

CHAP. II.

scruple or hypocrisy or protestation against any part join in it*;" a scheme when practicable, as it could not possibly be often rendered, far more eligible than the separation of sects, and hence the favourite object of Grotius and Taylor, as well as of Erasmus and Cassander. And in a remarkable and eloquent passage, Chillingworth declares that "protestants are inexcusable, if they did offer violence to other men's consciences;" which Knott had said to be notorious, as in fact it was, and as Chillingworth ought more explicitly to have admitted.† "Certainly," he observes in another place, "if protestants are faulty in this matter [of claiming authority], it is for doing it too much and not too little. This presumptuous imposing of the senses of men upon the words of God, the special senses of men upon the general words of God, and laying them upon men's consciences together, under the equal penalty of death and damnation, this vain conceit that we can speak of the things of God better than in the words of God; this deifying our own interpretations and tyrannous enforcing them upon others; this restraining of the word of God from that latitude and generality, and the understandings of men from that liberty wherein Christ and the apostles left them, is and hath been the only fountain of all the schisms of the church, and that which makes them immortal‡; the com-

* Chap. 3. § 81.

† Chap. 5. § 96.

‡ "This persuasion," he says in a note, "is no singularity of mine, but the doctrine which I have learned from divines of great learning and judgment. Let the reader be pleased to peruse the 7th book of Acontius de Stratagematibus Satanæ, and Zanchius his last oration delivered by him after the composing of the discord between him and Amerbachius, and he shall confess as much."

mon incendiary of Christendom, and that which tears in pieces not the coat but the bowels and members of Christ. Take away these walls of separation and all will quickly be one. Take away this persecuting, burning, cursing, damning of men for not subscribing the words of men as the words of God; require of Christians only to believe Christ, and to call no man master but him only; let those leave claiming infallibility that have no title to it, and let them that in their words disclaim it, disclaim it also in their actions. In a word, take away tyranny, &c." *

28. It is obvious that in this passage, and indeed throughout the volume, Chillingworth contravenes the prevailing theories of the Anglican church, full as distinctly as those of the Roman. He escaped however unscathed by the censure of that jealous hierarchy; his private friendship with Laud, the lustre of his name, the absence of factious and sectarian connexions, and still more perhaps the rapid gathering of the storms that swept both parties away, may be assigned as his protection. In later times his book obtained a high reputation; he was called the immortal Chillingworth; he was the favourite of all the moderate and the latitudinarian writers, of Tillotson, Locke, and Warburton. Those of opposite tenets, when they happen to have read his book, can do nothing else but condemn its tendency.

Hales on Schism.

29. A still more intrepid champion in the same cause was John Hales; for his little tract on

* Chap. 1. § 17.

CHAP. II.

Schism, not being in any part directed against the church of Rome, could have nothing to redeem the strong protestations against church authority, "which," as he bluntly expresses it, "is none;" words that he afterwards slightly qualified. The aim of Hales, as well as of Grotius, Calixtus, and Chillingworth, was to bring about a more comprehensive communion; but he went still farther; his language is rough and audacious *; his theology in some of his other writings has a scent of Racow; and though these crept slowly to light, there was enough in the earliest to make us wonder at the high name, the epithet Ever-memorable, which he obtained in the English church.

* "I must for my own part confess that councils and synods not only may and have erred, but considering the means how they are managed, it were a great marvel if they did not err, for what men are they of whom those great meetings do consist? Are they the best, the most learned, the most virtuous, the most likely to walk uprightly? No, the greatest, the most ambitious, and many times men of neither judgment nor learning; such are they of whom these bodies do consist. Are these men in common equity likely to determine for truth?"—Vol. i. p. 60. edit. 1765.

"Universality is such a proof of truth as truth itself is ashamed of; for universality is but a quainter and a trimmer name to signify the multitude. Now human authority at the strongest is but weak, but the multitude is the weakest part of human authority; it is the great patron of error, most easily abused and most hardly disabused. The beginning of error may be and mostly is from private persons, but the maintainer and continuer of error is the multitude. Private persons first beget errors in the multitude and make them public; and publicness of them begets them again in private persons. It is a thing which our common experience and practice acquaints us with, that when some private persons have gained authority with the multitude, and infused some error into them and made it public, the publicness of the error gains authority to it, and interchangeably prevails with private persons to entertain it. The most singular and strongest part of human authority is properly in the wisest and most virtuous; and those I trow are not the most universal."—iii. 164.

The treatise on Schism, from which these last passages are *not* extracted, was printed at Oxford in 1642, with some animadversions by the editor. Wood's Athenæ, iii. 414.

CHAP. II.

Controversies on grace and free-will. Augustinian scheme.

30. It is unnecessary to say that few disputes in theology have been so eagerly conducted, or so extensively ramified, as those which relate to the free will of man, and his capacity of turning himself towards God. In this place nothing more will be expected than a brief statement of the principal question, doing no injustice by a tone of partiality to either side. All shades of opinion, as it seems, may be reduced to two, which have long divided and will long divide the Christian world. According to one of these, the corrupt nature of man is incapable of exerting any power towards a state of acceptance with God, or even of willing it with an earnest desire, until excited by preventing (præveniens) grace; which grace is vouchsafed to some only, and is called free, because God is not limited by any respect of those persons to whom he accords this gift. Whether those who are thus called by the influence of the Spirit, are so irresistibly impelled to it, that their perseverance in the faith and good works which are the fruits of their election, may surely be relied upon, or, on the other hand, may either at first obdurately resist the divine impulses, or finally swerve from their state of grace, is another question, upon which those who agree in the principal doctrine have been at variance. It is also controverted among those who belong to this class of theologians, whether the election thus freely made out of mankind depends upon an eternal decree of predestination, or upon a sentence of God following the fall of man. And a third difference relates to the condition of man after he has been aroused by the Spirit from a state

of entire alienation from God; some holding that the completion as well as commencement of the work of conversion is wholly owing to the divine influence, while others maintain a co-operation of the will, so that the salvation of a sinner may in some degree be ascribed to himself. But the essential principle of all whom we reckon in this category of divines is the necessity of preventing grace, or, in other words, that it is not in the power of man to do any act, in the first instance, towards his own salvation. This, in some or other of its modifications, used to be deemed the orthodox scheme of doctrine; it was established in the Latin church by the influence of Augustin, it was generally held by the schoolmen, by most of the early reformers, and seems to be inculcated by the decrees of the council of Trent, as much as by the articles of the church of England. In a loose and modern acceptation of the word, it often goes by the name of Calvinism, which may perhaps be less improper, if we do not use the term in an exclusive sense, but, if it is meant to imply a particular relation to Calvin, leads to controversial chicane, and a mis-statement of the historical part of the question.

Semi-pelagian hypothesis.

31. An opposite class of theological reasoners belong to what is sometimes called the Semi-pelagian school. These concur with the former in the necessity of assistance from the Spirit to the endeavours of man towards subduing his evil tendencies, and renewing his heart in the fear and love of God, but conceive that every sinner is capable of seeking this assistance, which will not be refused him, and consequently of beginning the

work of conversion by his own will. They therefore either deny the necessity of preventing grace, except such as is exterior, or, which comes effectively to the same thing, assert that it is accorded in a sufficient measure to every one within the Christian church, whether at the time of baptism, or by some other means. They think the opposite opinion, whether founded on the hypothesis of an eternal decree or not, irreconcileable with the moral attributes of the Deity, and inconsistent with the general tenor of Scripture. The Semi-pelagian doctrine is commonly admitted to have been held by the Greek fathers; but the authority of Augustin, and the decisions of the Western church caused it to assume the character of an heresy. Some of the Scotists among the schoolmen appear to have made an approach to it, by their tenet of grace ex congruo. They thought that the human virtues and moral dispositions of unregenerate men were the predisposing circumstances which, by a sort of fitness, made them the objects of the divine goodness in according the benefits of his grace. Thus their own free-will, from which it was admitted that such qualities and actions might proceed, would be the real, though mediate, cause of their conversion. But this was rejected by the greater part, who asserted the absolute irrespective freedom of grace, and appealed to experience for its frequent efficacy over those who had no inherent virtues to merit it.

Tenets of the reformers.

32. The early reformers, and none more than Luther, maintained the absolute passiveness of the human will, so that no good actions even after con-

CHAP. II. version could be ascribed in any proper sense to man, but altogether to the operation of the Spirit. Not only, however, Melanchthon espoused the Synergistic doctrine, but the Lutheran church, not in any symbolic book, but in the general tenets of its members, has been thought to have gone a good way towards Semi-pelagianism, or what passed for such with the more rigid party.* In the reformed church, on the contrary, the Supra-lapsarian tenets of Calvin, or the immutable decrees of election and reprobation from all eternity, were obviously incompatible with any hypothesis that made the salvation of a sinner depend upon himself. But towards the close of the sixteenth century, these severer notions (which it may be observed by the way, had always been entirely rejected by the Anabaptists, and by some of greater name, such as Sebastian Castalio) began to be impugned by a few learned men. This led in England to what are called the Lambeth articles, drawn up by Whitgift, six of which assert the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination, and three deny that of the Semi-pelagians. But these, being not quite approved by the queen, or by Lord Burleigh, were never received by authority in our church. There can nevertheless be no reasonable or even sincere doubt that Calvinism, in the popular sense, was at this time prevalent; even Hooker adopted the Lam-

* Le Clerc says that the doctrine of Melanchthon, which Bossuet stigmatizes as Semi-pelagian, is that of the council of Trent. Bibl. Choisie, v. 341. I should put a different construction upon the Tridentine canons; but of course my practice in these nice questions is not great.

beth articles with verbal modifications that do not affect their sense.

Rise of Arminianism.

33. The few who, in England or in the reformed churches upon the Continent, embraced these novel and heterodox opinions, as they were then accounted, within the sixteenth century, excited little attention in comparison with James Arminius, who became professor of theology at Leyden in 1604. The controversy ripened in a few years; it was intimately connected, not, of course, in its own nature, but by some of those collateral influences which have so often determined the opinions of mankind, with the political relations between the Dutch clergy and the States of Holland, as it was afterwards with the still less theological differences of that government with its Stadtholder; it appealed, on one side, to reason, on the other, to authority and to force; an unequal conflict, till posterity restore the balance. Arminius died in 1609; he has left works on the main topics of debate; but in theological literature, the great chief of the Arminian or Remonstrant church is Simon Episcopius. The principles of Episcopius are more widely removed from those of the Augustinian school than the five articles, so well known as the leading tenets of Arminius, and condemned at the synod of Dort. Of this famous assembly it is difficult to speak in a few words. The copious history of Brandt is perhaps the best authority; though we must own that the opposite party have a right to be heard. We are here, however, on merely literary ground, and the proceedings of

Episcopius.

CHAP. II.

ecclesiastical synods are not strictly within any province of literary history.

His writings.

34. The works of Episcopius were collectively published in 1650, seven years after his death. They form two volumes in folio, and have been more than once re-printed. The most remarkable are the Confessio Remonstrantium, drawn up about 1624, the Apology for it against a censure of the opposite party, and what seems to have been a later work, and more celebrated, his Institutiones Theologicæ. These contain a new scheme of religion, compared with that of the established churches of Europe, and may justly be deemed the representative of the liberal or latitudinarian theology. For though the writings of Erasmus, Cassander, Castalio, and Acontius had tended to the same purpose, they were either too much weakened by the restraints of prudence, or too obscure and transitory, to draw much attention, or to carry any weight against the rigid and exclusive tenets which were sustained by power.

Their spirit and tendency.

35. The earlier treatises of Episcopius seem to speak on several subjects less unequivocally than the Theological Institutions; a reserve not perhaps to be censured, and which all parties have thought themselves warranted to employ, so long as either the hope of agreement with a powerful adversary, or of mitigating his severity, should remain. Hence the Confession of the Remonstrants explicitly states that they decline the Semi-pelagian controversy, contenting themselves with asserting that sufficient grace is bestowed on all who are called by the gospel, to comply with that divine call and obey its

precepts.* They used a form of words, which might seem equivalent to the tenet of original sin, and they did not avoid or refuse that term. But Episcopius afterwards denies it, at least in the extended sense of most theologians, almost as explicitly as Jeremy Taylor.† It was common in the seventeenth century to charge the Arminians, and especially Episcopius, with Socinianism. Bossuet, who seems to have quarrelled with all parties, and is neither Molinist nor Jansenist, Calvinist nor Arminian, never doubting that there is a firm footing between them, having attacked Episcopius and Grotius particularly for Semi-pelagianism and Socinianism, Le Clerc entered on their defence. But probably he would have passed with Bossuet, and hardly cared if he did pass, for a heretic, at least of the former denomination himself.‡

Great latitude allowed by them.

36. But the most distinguishing peculiarity in the writings of Episcopius was his reduction of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity far below the multitudinous articles of the churches; confining

* Episcop. Opera, vol. i. p. 64. De eo nemini litem movent Remonstrantes. I am not sure that my translation is right; but I think it is what they meant. By prevenient grace they seemed to have meant only the exterior grace of the gospel's promulgation, which is equivalent to the Semi-pelagian scheme. p. 189. Grotius latterly came into this opinion, though he had disclaimed every thing of the kind in his first dealings with theology. I have found the same doctrine in Calixtus; but I have preserved no reference as to either.

† Instit. Theolog. lib. iv. sect. v. c. 2. Corruptionis istius universalis nulla sunt indicia nec signa; imo non pauca sunt signa ex quibus colligitur naturam totam humanam sic corruptam non esse. The whole chapter, Ubi de peccato, quod vocant, originis agitur, et præcipua S. S. loca quibus inniti creditur, examinantur, appears to deny the doctrine entirely; but there may be some shades of distinction which have escaped me. Limborch (Theolog. Christiana, lib. iii. c. 4.) allows it in a qualified sense.

‡ Bibl. Choisie, vol. v.

CHAP. II.

them to propositions which no Christian can avoid acknowledging without manifest blame; such namely, wherein the subject, the predicate, and the connexion of the two are declared in Scripture by express or equivalent words.* He laid little stress on the authority of the church; notwithstanding the advantage he might have gained by the Anti-Calvinistic tenets of the fathers, admitting indeed the validity of the celebrated rule of Vincentius Lirinensis, in respect of tradition, which the upholders of primitive authority have always had in their mouths, but adding that it is utterly impossible to find any instance wherein it can be usefully applied.†

Progress o Arminianism.

37. The Arminian doctrine spread, as is well known, in despite of obloquy and persecution, over much of the protestant region of Europe. The

* Necessaria quæ scripturis continentur talia esse omnia, ut sine manifesta hominis culpa ignorari, negari aut in dubium vocari nequeant; quia videlicet tum subjectum, tum prædicatum, tum subjecti cum prædicato connexio necessaria in ipsis scripturis est, aut expressè, aut æquipollenter. Inst. Theol. l. iv. c. 9.

† Instit. Theolog. l. iv. sect. i. c. 15. Dupin says of Episcopius: Il n'a employé dans ses ouvrages que des passages de l'écriture sainte qu'il possédoit parfaitement. Il avoit aussi lu les Rabbins, mais on ne voit pas qu'il eût étudié les pères ni l'antiquité ecclésiastique. Il écrit nettement et méthodiquement, pose des principes, ne dissimule rien des objections qu'on peut faire contre, et y repond du mieux qu'il peut. On voit en lui une tolérance parfaite pour les Sociniens quoiqu'il se déclare contre eux; pour le parti d'Arminius, jamais il n'a eu de plus zélé et de plus habile défenseur. Bibliothèque des Auteurs séparés de l'Eglise Romaine, ii. 495.

The life of Episcopius has been written by Limborch. Justice has been done to this eminent person and to the Arminian party which he led, in two recent English works, Nicholls's Calvinism and Arminianism displayed, and Calder's Life of Episcopius (1835). The latter is less verbose and more temperate than the former, and may be recommended, as a fair and useful production, to the general reader. Two theological parties in this country, though opposite in most things, are inveterately prejudiced against the Leyden school.

Lutheran churches were already come into it; and in England there was a predisposing bias in the rulers of the church towards the authority of the primitive fathers, all of whom, before the age of Augustin, and especially the Greek, are acknowledged to have been on that side, which promoted the growth of this Batavian theology.* Even in France, it was not without considerable influence. Cameron, a divine of Saumur, one of the chief protestant seminaries, devised a scheme of syncretism, which, notwithstanding much opposition, gained ground in those churches. It was supported by some highly distinguished for learning, Amyraut, Daillé, and Blondel. Of this scheme it is remarkable, that while in its literal purport it can only seem a modification of the Augustinian hypothesis, with an awkward and feeble admixture of the other, yet its tendency was to efface the former by degrees, and to slide into the Arminian hypothesis, which ultimately became almost general in the reformed church.

Cameron.

Rise of Jansenism.

38. These perplexities were not confined to protestant theology. The church of Rome, strenuous to maintain the tenets of Augustin, and yet

* Gerard Vossius, in his Historia Pelagiana, the first edition of which, in 1618, was considerably enlarged afterwards, admitted that the first four centuries did not countenance the predestinarian scheme of Augustin. This gave offence in Holland; his book was publicly censured, he was excommunicated and forbidden to teach in public or private. Vossius, like others, remembered that he had a large family, and made, after some years, a sort of retractation, which of course did not express his real opinion. Le Clerc seems to doubt whether he acted from this motive or from what he calls simplicity, an expression for weakness. Vossius was, like his contemporary Usher, a man of much more learning than strength of intellect. Bibliothèque Universelle, xvii. 312. 329. Niceron, vol. xiii.

CHAP. II.

to condemn those who did the same, has been charged with exerting the plenitude of her infallibility to enforce the belief of an incoherent syncretism. She had condemned Baius, as giving too much efficacy to grace; she was on the point of condemning Molina for giving too little. Both Clement VIII. and Paul V. leaned to the Dominicans against the Jesuits in this controversy; but the great services and influence of the latter order prevented a decision which would have humbled them before so many adversaries. It may nevertheless be said that the Semi-pelagian, or Arminian doctrine, though consonant to that of the Jesuits, was generally ill received in the church of Rome, till the opposite hypothesis, that of Augustin and Calvin, having been asserted by one man in more unlimited propositions than had been usual, a re-action took place, that eventually both gave an apparent triumph to the Molinist party, and endangered the church itself by the schism to which the controversy gave rise. The Augustinus of Jansenius, bishop of Ypres, was published in 1640, and in the very next year was censured at Rome. But as the great controversy that sprung out of the condemnation of this book belongs more strictly to the next period, we shall defer it for the present.

Socinus. Volkelius.

39. The Socinian academy at Racow which drew to itself several proselytes from other countries, acquired considerable importance in theological literature after the beginning of the century. It was not likely that a sect regarded with peculiar animosity would escape in the general disposition

of the catholic party in Poland to oppress the dissidents whom they had long feared; the Racovian institution was broken up and dispersed in 1638, though some of its members continued to linger in Poland for twenty years longer. The Bibliotheca Fratrum Polonorum, published at Amsterdam (in the title-page, Irenopolis) in 1658, contains chiefly the works of Socinian theologians who belong to this first part of the century. The Prælectiones Theologicæ of Faustus Socinus himself, being published in 1609, after his death, fall within this class. They contain a systematic theology according to his scheme, and are praised by Eichhorn for the acuteness and depth they often display.* In these, among his other deviations from the general orthodoxy of Christendom, Socinus astonished mankind by denying the evidences of natural religion, resolving our knowledge even of a deity into revelation. This paradox is more worthy of those who have since adopted it, than of so acute a reasoner as Socinus.† It is in fact not very congenial to the spirit of his theology, which rejecting all it thinks incompatible with reason as to the divine attributes, should at least have some established notions of them upon rational principles. The later Socinians, even those nearest to the time, did

* Eichhorn, vi. part 1. p. 283. Simon, however, observes that Socinus knew little Greek or Hebrew, as he owns himself, though he pretends to decide questions which require a knowledge of these languages. I quote from Bibliothèque Universelle, vol. xxiii. p. 498.

† Tillotson, in one of his sermons (I cannot give the reference, writing from memory), dissents, as might be expected, from this denial of natural religion, but with such encomiums on Socinus as some archbishops would have avoided.

CHAP. II.

not follow their master in this part of his tenets.* The treatise of Volkelius, son-in-law of Socinus, De vera Religione, is chiefly taken from the latter. It was printed at Racow in 1633, and again in Holland in 1641; but most of the latter impression having been burned by order of the magistrates, it is a very scarce book, and copies were formerly sold at great prices. But the hangman's bonfire has lost its charm, and forbidden books, when they happen to occur, are no longer in much request. The first book out of five, in this volume of Volkelius, on the attributes of God, is by Crellius.

Crellius. Ruarus.

40. Crellius was, perhaps, the most eminent of the Racovian school in this century.† Many of its members, like himself, were Germans, their sect having gained ground in some of the Lutheran states about this time, as it did also in the United Provinces. Grotius broke a lance with him in his treatise De Satisfactione Christi, to which he replied in another with the same title. Each retired from the field with the courtesies of chivalry towards his antagonist. The Dutch Arminians in general, though very erroneously supposed to concur in all the leading tenets of the Racovian theologians, treated them with much respect.‡ Grotius was

* Socinum sectæ ejus principes nuper Volkelius, nunc Ruarus non probant, in eo quod circa Dei cognitionem petita e natura rerum argumenta abdicaverit. Grot. Epist. 964. See too Ruari Epist. p. 210.

† Dupin praises Volkelius highly, but says of Crellius; il avoit beaucoup étudié, mais il n'étoit pas un esprit fort élevé. Bibl. des Auteurs separés, ii. 614. v. 628. Simon, on the contrary, (ubi suprà) praises Crellius highly, and says no other commentator of his party is comparable to him.

‡ The Remonstrants refused to anathematize the Socinians, Episcopius says, on account of the apparent arguments in their favour, and the differences that have always existed on that head. Apologia Confessionis. Episc. Op. vol. i. His own tenets, were probably what some would call Arian; thus

often reproached with the intimacies he kept up among these obnoxious sectaries; and many of his letters, as well as those of Curcellæus and other leading Arminians, bear witness to the personal regard they felt for them.* Several proofs of this will be also found in the epistles of Ruarus, a book which throws much light on the theological opinions of the age. Ruarus was a man of acuteness, learning, and piety, not wholly concurring with the Racovians, but not far removed from them.† The com-

he says, personis his tribus divinitatem tribui, non collateraliter aut co-ordinatè, sed subordinatè. Inst. Theol. l. iv. c. 2. 32. Grotius says, he finds the Catholics more *tractable* about the Trinity than the Calvinists.

* Grotius never shrunk from defending his intimacy with Ruarus and Crellius, and after praising the former, concludes, in one of his letters, with this liberal and honest sentiment. Ego vero ejus sum animi, ejusque instituti, ut mihi cum hominibus cunctis, præcipue cum Christianis quantumvis errantibus necessitudinis aliquid putem intercedere, idque me neque dictis neque factis pigeat demonstrare. Epist. 860. Hæretici nisi aliquid haberent veri ac nobiscum commune, jam hæretici non essent. 2da Series, p. 873. Nihil veri eo factum est deterius, quod in id Socinus incidit. p. 880. This, he thought, was the case in some questions, where Socinus, without designing it, had agreed with antiquity. Neque me pudeat consentire Socino, si quando is in veram veteremque sententiam incidit, ut sanè fecit in controversia de justitia per fidem, et aliis nonnullis. Id. p. 797. Socinus hoc non agens in antiquæ ecclesiæ sensus nonnunquam incidit, et eas partes, ut ingenio valebat, percoluit feliciter. Admiscuit alia quæ etiam vera dicenti auctoritatem detraxere. Epist. 966. Even during his controversy with Crellius he wrote to him in a very handsome manner. Bene autem in epistola tua, quæ mihi longè gratissima advenit, de me judicas, non esse me eorum in numero, qui ob sententias salva pietate dissentientes, alieno a quoquam sim animo, aut boni alicujus amicitiam repudiare. Etiam in libro de vera religione, [Volkelii] quem jam percurri, relecturus et posthac, multa invenio summo cum judicio observata; illud vero sæculo gratulor, repertos homines, qui neutiquam in controversiis subtilibus tantum ponunt, quantum in vera vitæ emendatione, et quotidiano ad sanctitatem profectu. Epist. 280. (1631). He wrote with kindness and regret on the breaking up of the establishment at Racow in 1638. Ep. 1006. Grotius has been as obnoxious on the score of Socinianism as of Popery. His Commentaries on the Scriptures are taxed with it, and in fact he is not in good odour with any but the Arminian divines, nor do they, we see, wholly agree with him.

† Ruarus nearly agreed with Grotius as to the atonement; at

CHAP. II.

mentaries of Grotius on the Scriptures have been also charged with Socinianism; but he pleaded that his interpretations were those of the fathers.

least the latter thought so. De satisfactione ita mihi respondit, ut nihil admodum controversiæ relinqueretur. Grot. Epist. 2da series, p. 881. See also Ruari Epistolæ, p. 148. 282. He paid also more respect to the second century than some of his brethren, p. 100. 439., and even struggles to agree with the Ante-Nicene fathers, though he cannot come up to them. p. 275. 296. But in answer to some of his correspondents who magnified primitive authority, he well replies: Deinde quæro quis illos fixit veritati terminos? quis duo illa prima secula ab omni errore absolvit? Annon ecclesiastica historia satis testatur, nonnullas opiniones portentosas jam tum inter eos qui nomen Christi dederant, invaluisse? Quin ut verum fatear, res ipsa docet nonnullos posterioris ævi acutius in enodandis Scripturis versatos; et ut de nostra ætate dicam, valde me pœniteret Calvini vestri ac Bezæ si nihilo solidius sacras literas interpretarentur, quam video illos ipsos, quos tu mihi obducis, fecisse. p. 183. He lamented the fatal swerving from protestantism into which reverence for antiquity was leading his friend Grotius: fortassis et antiquitatis veneratio, quæ gravibus quibusdam Pontificiorum erroribus præluxit, ultra lineam eum perduxit, p. 277. (1642); and in answer to Mersenne, who seems to have had some hopes of his conversion, and recommended to him the controversy of Grotius with Rivet, he plainly replies that the former had extenuated some things in the church of Rome which ought to be altered. p. 258. This he frequently laments in the course of his letters, but treats him with gentleness in comparison with some of the sterner Socinians. It is remarkable that even he and Crellius seem to have excluded the members of the church of Rome, except the "vulgus ineruditum et Cassandri gregales," from salvation; and this while almost all churches were anathematizing themselves in the same way. Ruar. Epist. p. 9. and p. 167.

This book contains two centuries of epistles, the second of which is said to be very scarce, and I doubt whether many have read the first, which must excuse my quotations. The learning, sense, and integrity of Ruarus, as well as the high respect which Calixtus, Curcellæus, and other great men felt for him, render the book of some interest. He tells us that while he was in England, about 1617, a professorship at Cambridge was offered to him, worth 100*l.* per annum, besides as much more from private pupils. p. 71. But he probably mistook the civil speeches of individuals for an offer: he was not eminent enough for such a proposal on the part of the university; and at least he must have been silent about his Socinianism. The morality of the early Socinians was very strict and even ascetic, proofs of which appear in these letters. p. 306. et alibi.

41. Two questions of great importance which had been raised in the preceding century, became still more interesting in the present, on account of the more frequent occasion that the force of circumstances gave for their investigation, and the greater names that were engaged in it. Both of these arose out of the national establishment of churches, and their consequent relation to the commonwealth. One regarded the power of the magistrate over the church he recognized; the other involved the right of his subjects to dissent from it by non-conformity, or by a different mode of worship.

CHAP. II.

Erastianism

42. Erastus, by proposing to substitute for the ancient discipline of ecclesiastical censures, and especially for excommunication, a perpetual superintendence of the civil power over the faith and practice of the church, had given name to a scheme generally denominated Erastianism, though in some respects far broader than any thing he seems to have suggested. It was more elaborately maintained by Hooker in his Ecclesiastical Polity, and had been, in fact, that on which the English reformation under Henry was originally founded. But as it was manifestly opposed to the ultramontane pretensions of the see of Rome, and even to the more moderate theories of the catholic church, being of course destructive of her independence, so did it stand in equal contradiction to the presbyterian scheme of Scotland and of the United Provinces. In the latter country, the States of Holland had been favourable to the Arminians, so far at least as to repress any violence against them;

maintained by Hooker,

and Grotius.

CHAP. II.

the clergy were exasperated and intolerant; and this raised the question of civil supremacy, in which Grotius by one of his early works, entitled Pietas Ordinum Hollandiæ, published in 1613, sustained the right of the magistrate to inhibit dangerous controversies.

His Treatise on ecclesiastical power of the state.

43. He returned, after the lapse of some years, to the same theme in a larger and more comprehensive work, De Imperio Summarum Potestatum circa Sacra. It is written upon the Anglican principles of regal supremacy, which had, however, become far less popular with the rulers of our church, than in the days of Cranmer, Whitgift, and Hooker. After stating the question, and proving the ecclesiastical power of the magistrate by natural law, Scripture, established usage, agreement of Heathen and Christian writers, and the reason of the thing, he distinguishes controul over sacred offices from their exercise, and proceeds to inquire whether the magistrate may take the latter on himself; which, though practised in the early ages of the world, he finds inconvenient at present, the manners required for the regal and sacerdotal character being wholly different.*

44. Actions may be prescribed or forbidden by natural divine law, positive divine law, or human law; the latter extending to nothing but what is left indefinite by the other two. But though we are bound not to act in obedience to human laws which contradict the divine, we are also bound not forcibly to resist them. We may defend ourselves

* Cap. 4.

CHAP. II.

by force against an equal, not against a superior, as he proves first from the Digest, and secondly from the New Testament.* Thus the rule of passive obedience is unequivocally laid down. He meets the recent examples of resistance to sovereigns, by saying that they cannot be approved where the kings have had an absolute power; but where they are bound by compact or the authority of a senate or of estates, since their power is not unlimited, they may be resisted on just grounds by that authority.† "Which I remark," he proceeds to say, "least any one, as I sometimes have known, should disgrace a good cause by a mistaken defence."

45. The magistrate can alter nothing which is definitely laid down by the positive law of God; but he may regulate the circumstantial observance even of such; and as to things undefined in Scripture he has plenary jurisdiction; such as the temporalities of the church, the convocation of synods, the election of pastors. The burthen of proof lies on those who would limit the civil power by affirming any thing to be prescribed by the divine law.‡ The authority attributed in Scripture to churches does not interfere with the power of the magistrate, being persuasive and not coercive. The whole church has no coercive power by divine right.§ But since the visible church is a society of divine institution, it follows that whatever is naturally competent to a lawful society, is competent also to the church,

* Cap. 3.

† Sin alicubi reges tales fuere, qui pactis sive positivis legibus et senatus alicujus aut ordinum decretis adstringerentur, in hos, ut summum imperium non obtinent, arma ex optimatum tanquam superiorum sententia sumi justis de causis potuerunt. Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

§ Cap. 4.

CHAP. II.

unless it can be proved to be withdrawn from it.* It has therefore a legislative government (regimen constitutivum), of which he gives the institution of the Lord's day as an example. But this does not impair the sovereign's authority in ecclesiastical matters. In treating of that supremacy, he does not clearly show what jurisdiction he attributes to the magistrate; most of his instances relating to the temporalities of the church, as to which no question is likely to arise.† But on the whole he means undoubtedly to carry the supremacy as far as is done in England.

46. In a chapter on the due exercise of the civil supremacy over the church, he shows more of a protestant feeling than would have been found in him when he approached the latter years of his life‡; and declares fully against submission to any visible authority in matters of faith, so that sovereigns are not bound to follow the ministers of the church in what they may affirm as doctrine. Ecclesiastical synods he deems often useful, but thinks the magistrate is not bound to act with their consent, and that they are sometimes pernicious.§ The magistrate may determine who shall compose such synods‖; a strong position which he endea-

* Quandoquidem ecclesia cœtus est divina lege non permissus tantum sed et institutus, de aspectabili cœtu loquor, sequitur ea omnia quæ cœtibus legitimis naturaliter competunt, etiam ecclesiæ competere, quatenus adempta non probantur. Ibid.

† Cap. 5.

‡ Cap. 6. He states the question to be this: An post apostolorum ætatem aut persona aut cœtus sit aliquis aspectabilis, de quâ quove certi esse possimus ac debeamus, quæcunque ab ipsis proponantur, esse indubitatæ veritatis. Negant hoc Evangelici; aiunt Romanenses.

§ Cap. 7.

‖ Designare eos, qui ad synodum sunt venturi.

vours to prove at great length. Even if the members are elected by the church, the magistrate may reject those whom he reckons unfit; he may preside in the assembly, confirm, reject, annul its decisions. He may also legislate about the whole organisation of the established church.* It is for him to determine what form of religion shall be publicly exercised; an essential right of sovereignty as political writers have laid it down. And this is confirmed by experience; "for if any one shall ask why the Romish religion flourished in England under Mary, the protestant under Elizabeth, no cause can be assigned but the pleasure of these queens, or, as some might say, of the queens and parliaments." In this manner Grotius disposes of a great question of casuistry by what has been done; as if murder and adultery might not be established by the same logic. Natural law would be resolved into history, were we always to argue in a similar way. But this, as will appear more fully hereafter, is not the usual reasoning of Grotius. To the objection from the danger of abuse in conceding so much power to the sovereign, he replies that no other theory will secure us better. On every supposition the power must be lodged in men, who are all liable to error. We

* Cap. 8. Nulla in re magis eluceseit vis summi imperii, quam quod in ejus arbitrio est quænam religio publicè exerceatur, idque præcipuum inter majestatis jura ponunt omnes qui politicè scripserunt. Docet idem experientia; si enim quæras cur in Anglia Maria regnante Romana religio, Elizabetha vero imperante, Evangelica viguerit, causa proxima reddi non poterit, nisi ex arbitrio reginarum, aut, ut quibusdam videtur, reginarum ac parlamenti. p. 242.

CHAP. II.

must console ourselves by a trust in divine providence alone.*

47. The sovereign may abolish false religions and punish their professors, which no one else can. Here again we find precedents instead of arguments; but he says that the primitive church disapproved of capital punishments for heresy, which seems to be his main reason for doing the same. The sovereign may also enjoin silence in controversies, and inspect the conduct of the clergy without limiting himself by the canons, though he will do well to regard them. Legislation and jurisdiction, that is, of a coercive nature, do not belong to the church, except as they may be conceded to it by the civil power.† He fully explains the various kinds of ecclesiastical law that have been gradually introduced. Even the power of the keys, which is by divine right, cannot be so exercised as to exclude the appellant jurisdiction of the sovereign; as he proves by the Roman law, and by the usage of the parliament of Paris.‡

48. The sovereign has a control (inspectionem cum imperio) over the ordination of priests, and certainly possesses a right of confirmation, that is, the assignment of an ordained minister to a given cure.§ And though the election of pastors belongs to the church, this may, for good reasons, be taken into the hands of the sovereign. Instances in point are easily found, and the chapter upon the subject contains an interesting historical summary of this

* Cap. 8.

† Ibid.

‡ Cap. 9.

§ Cap. 10. Confirmationem hanc summæ potestati acceptam ferendam nemo sanus negaverit.

part of ecclesiastical law. In every case, the sovereign has a right of annulling an election, and also of removing a pastor from the local exercise of his ministry.* CHAP. II.

Remark upon this theory.

49. This is the full development of an Erastian theory, which Cranmer had early espoused, and which Hooker had maintained in a less extensive manner. Bossuet has animadverted upon it, nor can it appear tolerable to a zealous churchman.† It was well received in England by the lawyers, who had always been jealous of the spiritual tribunals, especially of late years, when under the patronage of Laud, they had taken a higher tone than seemed compatible with the supremacy of the common law. The scheme, nevertheless, is open to some objections, when propounded in so unlimited a manner; none of which is more striking than that it tends to convert differences of religious opinion into crimes against the state, and furnishes bigotry with new arguments as well as new arms, in its conflict with the free exercise of human reason. Grotius, however, feared rather that he had given too little power to the civil magistrate than too much.‡

* Cap. 10.

† See Le Clerc's remarks on what Bossuet has said. Bibliothèque Choisie, v. 349.

‡ Ego multo magis vereor, ne minus quam par est magistratibus, aut plusquam par est pastoribus tribuerim, quam ne in alteram partem iterum (?) excesserim, nec sic quidem illis satisfiet qui se ecclesiam vocant. Epist. 42. This was in 1614, after the publication of the Pietas Ordinum Hollandiæ. As he drew nearer to the church of Rome, or that of Canterbury, he must probably have somewhat modified his Erastianism. And yet he seems never to have been friendly to the temporal power of bishops. He writes in August 1641, Episcopis Angliæ videtur mansurum nomen prope sine re, accisa et opulentia et auctoritate. Mihi non displicet ecclesiæ pastores et ab inani pompa et a curis sæcularium rerum sublevari. p. 1011.

CHAP. II.

Toleration of religious tenets.

50. Persecution for religious heterodoxy, in all its degrees, was in the sixteenth century the principle, as well as the practice of every church. It was held inconsistent with the sovereignty of the magistrate to permit any religion but his own; inconsistent with his duty to suffer any but the true. The edict of Nantes was a compromise between belligerent parties; the toleration of the dissidents in Poland was nearly of the same kind; but no state powerful enough to restrain its sectaries from the exercise of their separate worship had any scruples about the right and obligation to do so. Even the writers of that century, who seemed most strenuous for toleration, Castalio, Celso, and Koornhert, had confined themselves to denying the justice of penal, and especially of capital inflictions for heresy; the liberty of public worship had but incidentally, if at all, been discussed. Acontius had developed larger principles, distinguishing the fundamental from the accessory doctrines of the gospel; which, by weakening the associations of bigotry, prepared the way for a catholic tolerance. Episcopius speaks in the strongest terms of the treatise of Acontius, de Stratagematibus Satanæ, and says that the Remonstrants trod closely in his steps, as would appear by comparing their writings; so that

He had a regard for Laud, as the restorer of a reverence for primitive antiquity, and frequently laments his fate; but had said, in 1640, Doleo quod episcopi nimium intendendo potentiæ suæ nervos odium sibi potius quam amorem populorum pariunt. Ep. 1390.

he shall quote no passages in proof, their entire books bearing witness to the conformity.*

Claimed by the Arminians.

51. The Arminian dispute led by necessary consequence to the question of public toleration. They sought at first a free admission to the pulpits, and in an excellent speech of Grotius, addressed to the magistrates of Amsterdam in 1616, he objects to a separate toleration as rending the bosom of the church. But it was soon evident that nothing more could be obtained; and their adversaries refused this. They were driven therefore to contend for religious liberty, and the writings of Episcopius are full of this plea. Against capital punishments for heresy he raises his voice with indignant severity, and asserts that the whole Christian world abhorred the fatal precedent of Calvin in the death of Servetus.† This indicates a remarkable change already wrought in the sentiments of mankind. Certain it is, that no capital punishments for heresy were inflicted in protestant countries after this time; nor were they as frequently or as boldly vindicated as before.‡

* Episcop. Opera, i. 301. (edit. 1665.)

† Calvinus signum primus extulit supra alios omnes, et exemplum dedit in theatro Gebennensi funestissimum, quodque Christianus orbis merito execratur et abominatur; nec hoc contentus tam atroci facinore, cruento simul animo et calamo parentavit. Apologia pro Confess. Remonstrantium, c. 24. p. 241. The whole passage is very remarkable, as an indignant reproof of a party, who, while living under popish governments, cry out for liberty of conscience, and deny the right of punishing opinions; yet in all their writings and actions, when they have the power, display the very opposite principles.

De hæreticorum pœnis quæ scripsi, in iis mecum sentit Gallia et Germania, ut puto, omnis. Grot. Epist. p. 941. (1612.) Some years sooner there had been remains of the leaven in France. Adversus hæreticidia, he says in 1626, satis ut

CHAP. II.

by the Independents;

52. The Independents claim to themselves the honour of having been the first to maintain the principles of general toleration, both as to freedom of worship, and immunity from penalties for opinion. But that the Arminians were not as early promulgators of the same noble tenets, seems not to have been proved. Crellius in his Vindiciæ pro Religionis Libertate, 1636, contended for the Polish dissidents, and especially for his own sect.* The principle is implied, if not expressed, in the writings of Chillingworth, and still more of Hales; but the first famous plea, in this country, for tolerance in religion, on a comprehensive basis and on deep-seated foundations, was the Liberty of Prophesying by Jeremy Taylor. This celebrated work was written, according to Taylor's dedication, during his retirement in Wales, whither he was driven, as he expresses it, "by this great storm which hath dashed the vessel of the church all in pieces," and published in 1647. He speaks of himself as without access

and by Jeremy Taylor.

arbitror plane locutus sum, certè ita ut hic multos ob id offenderim. p. 789. Our own Fuller, I am sorry to say, in his Church History, written about 1650, speaks with some disapprobation of the sympathy of the people with Legat and Wightman, burned by James I., in 1614; and this is the more remarkable, as he is a well-natured and not generally bigoted writer. I should think he was the latest protestant who has tarnished his name by such sentiments. James who, in some countries, would have had certain reasons for dreading the fire himself, designed to have burned a third heretic, if the humanity of the multitude had not been greater than his own.

* This short tract, which will be found among the collected works of Crellius, in the Bibliotheca Fratrum Polonorum, contains a just and temperate pleading for religious liberty, but little which can appear very striking in modern times. It is said, nevertheless, to have been translated aud republished by D' Holbach about 1760. This I have not seen, but there must, I presume, have been a good deal of *condiment* added to make it stimulating enough for that school.

to books; it is evident, however, from the abundance of his quotations, that he was not much in want of them; and from this, as well as other strong indications, we may reasonably believe, that a considerable part of this treatise had been committed to paper long before.

His Liberty of Prophesying.

53. The argument of this important book rests on one leading maxim, derived from the Arminian divines, as it was in them from Erasmus and Acontius, that the fundamental truths of Christianity are comprised in narrow compass, not beyond the Apostles' creed in its literal meaning; that all the rest is matter of disputation, and too uncertain, for the most part, to warrant our condemning those who differ from us, as if their error must be criminal. This one proposition, much expanded, according to Taylor's diffuse style, and displayed in a variety of language, pervades the whole treatise; a small part of which, in comparison with the rest, bears immediately on the point of political toleration, as a duty of civil governments and of churches invested with power. In the greater portion, Taylor is rather arguing against that dogmatism of judgment, which induces men, either singly or collectively, to pronounce with confidence where only a varying probability can be attained. This spirit is the religious, though not entirely the political, motive of intolerance; and by chasing this from the heart, he inferred not that he should lay wide the door to universal freedom, but dispose the magistrate to consider more equitably the claims of every sect. "Whatsoever is against the foundation of faith, or contrary to

CHAP. II.

good life and the laws of obedience, or destructive to human society and the public and just interests of bodies politic, is out of the limits of my question, and does not pretend to compliance or toleration; so that I allow no indifferency, nor any countenance to those religions whose principles destroy government, nor to those religions, if there be any such, that teach ill life."

Boldness of his doctrines.

54. No man, as Taylor here teaches, is under any obligation to believe that in revelation, which is not so revealed, but that wise men and good men have differed in their opinions about it. And the great variety of opinions in churches, and even in the same church, "there being none that is in prosperity," as he with rather a startling boldness puts it, "but changes her doctrines every age, either by bringing in new doctrines, or by contradicting her old," shows that we can have no term of union, but that wherein all agree, the creed of the apostles.* And hence, though we may undoubtedly carry on our own private inquiries as much farther as we see reason, none who hold this fundamental faith are to be esteemed heretics, nor liable to punishment. And here he proceeds to reprove all those oblique acts which are not direct persecutions of men's persons, the destruction of books, the forbidding the publication of new ones, the setting out fraudulent editions and similar acts

* "Since no churches believe themselves infallible, that only excepted which all other churches say is most of all deceived, it were strange if, in so many articles, which make up their several bodies of confessions, they had not mistaken, every one of them, in some thing or other." This is Taylor's fearless mode of grappling with his argument; and any other must give a church that claims infallibility the advantage.

of falsehood, by which men endeavour to stifle or prevent religious inquiry. "It is a strange industry and an importune diligence that was used by our forefathers; of all those heresies which gave them battle and employment, we have absolutely no record or monument, but what themselves who are adversaries have transmitted to us; and we know that adversaries, especially such who observed all opportunities to discredit both the persons and doctrines of the enemy, are not always the best records or witnesses of such transactions. We see it now in this very age, in the present distemperatures, that parties are no good registers of the actions of the adverse side; and if we cannot be confident of the truth of a story now, now I say that it is possible for any man, and likely that the interested adversary will discover the imposture, it is far more unlikely that after ages should know any other truth, but such as serves the ends of the representers." *

His notions of uncertainty in theological tenets.

55. None were accounted heretics by the primitive church, who held by the Apostles' creed, till the council of Nice defined some things, rightly indeed, as Taylor professes to believe, but perhaps with too much alteration of the simplicity of ancient faith, so that "he had need be a subtle man who understands the very words of the new determinations." And this was carried much farther by later councils, and in the Athanasian creed, of which, though protesting his own persuasion in its truth, he intimates not a little disapprobation.

* Vol. vii. p. 424. Heber's edition of Taylor.

The necessary articles of faith are laid down clearly in Scripture; but no man can be secure, as to mysterious points, that he shall certainly understand and believe them in their true sense. This he shows first from the great discrepancy of readings in manuscripts, (an argument which he overstates in a very uncritical and incautious manner); next from the different senses the words will bear, which there is no certain mark to distinguish, the infinite variety of human understandings, swayed, it may be, by interest, or determined by accidental and extrinsical circumstances, and the fallibility of those means, by which men hope to attain a clear knowledge of scriptural truth. And after exposing, certainly with no extenuation, the difficulties of interpretation, he concludes that since these ordinary means of expounding Scripture are very dubious, "he that is the wisest, and by consequence the likeliest to expound truest, in all probability of reason, will be very far from confidence; and therefore a wise man would not willingly be prescribed to by others; and if he be also a just man, he will not impose upon others; for it is best every man should be left in that liberty, from which no man can justly take him, unless he could secure him from error; so here there is a necessity to conserve the liberty of prophesying and interpreting Scripture; a necessity derived from the consideration of the difficulty of Scripture in questions controverted, and the uncertainty of any internal medium of interpretation.

CHAP. II.

His low opinion of the fathers.

56. Taylor would in much of this have found an echo in the advocates of the church of Rome, and in some protestants of his own communion. But he passes onward to assail their bulwarks. Tradition or the testimony of the church, he holds insufficient and uncertain, for the reasons urged more fully by Daillé; the authority of councils is almost equally precarious, from their inconsistency, their liability to factious passions, and the doubtful authenticity of some of their acts; the pope's claim to infallibility is combated on the usual grounds; the judgment of the fathers is shown to be inconclusive by their differences among themselves, and their frequent errors; and professing a desire that "their great reputation should be preserved as sacred as it ought," he refers the reader to Daillé for other things; and, "shall only consider that the writings of the fathers have been so corrupted by the intermixture of heretics, so many false books put forth in their names, so many of their writings lost which would more clearly have explicated their sense, and at last an open profession made and a trade of making the fathers speak not what themselves thought, but what other men pleased, that it is a great instance of God's providence and care of his church, that we have so much good preserved in the writings which we receive from the fathers, and that all truth is not as clear gone as is the certainty of their great authority and reputation."*

* It seems not quite easy to reconcile this with what Taylor has just before said of his desire to preserve the reputation of the fathers sacred. In no writer is it more necessary to observe the *animus* with which he writes; for, giving way to his impetuosity, when he has said any thing that would give offence, or which he thought

CHAP. II.

Difficulty of finding out truth.

§ 57. The authority of the church cannot be any longer alleged when neither that of popes and councils, nor of ancient fathers is maintainable; since the diffusive church has no other means of speaking, nor can we distinguish by any extrinsic test the greater or better portion of it from the worse. And thus, after dismissing respectfully the pretences of some to expound Scripture by the Spirit, as impertinent to the question of dictating the faith of others, he comes to the reason of each man, as the best judge, for himself, of religious controversies; reason, that may be exercised either in chusing a guide, if it feel its own incompetency, or in examining the grounds of belief. The latter has great advantages, and no man is bound to know any thing of that concerning which he is not able to judge for himself. But reason may err, as he goes on to prove, without being culpable; that which is plain to one understanding, being obscure to another, and among various sources of error which he enumerates as incidental to mankind, that of education being "so great and invincible a prejudice, that he who masters the inconvenience of it is more to be commended than he can justly be blamed that complies with it." And thus not only single men but whole bodies take unhesitat-

incautious, it was not his custom, so far as we can judge, to expunge or soften it, but to insert something else of an opposite colour, without taking any pains to harmonize his context. He probably revised hardly at all what he had written before it went to the press. This makes it easy to quote passages, especially short ones, from Taylor, which do not exhibit his real way of thinking; if indeed his way of thinking itself did not vary with the wind that blew from different regions of controversy.

ingly and unanimously opposite sides from those who have imbibed another kind of instruction, and "it is strange that all the Dominicans should be of one opinion in the matter of predestination and immaculate conception, and all the Franciscans of the quite contrary, as if their understandings were formed in a different mould and furnished with various principles by their very rule." These and the like prejudices are not absolute excuses to every one, and are often accompanied with culpable dispositions of mind; but the impossibility of judging others renders it incumbent on us to be lenient towards all, and neither to be peremptory in denying that those who differ from us have used the best means in their power to discover the truth, nor to charge their persons, whatever we may their opinions, with odious consequences which they do not avow.

Grounds of toleration.

58. This diffuse and not very well arranged vindication of diversity of judgment in religion, comprised in the first twelve sections of the Liberty of Prophesying, is the proper basis of the second part, which maintains the justice of toleration as a consequence from the former principle. The general arguments, or prejudices, on which punishment for religious tenets had been sustained, turned on their criminality in the eyes of God, and the duty of the magistrate to sustain God's honour and to guard his own subjects from sin. Taylor, not denying that certain and known idolatry, or any sort of practical impiety, may be punished corporally, because it is matter of fact, asserts that no matter of mere opinion, no errors that of themselves are not sins, are

CHAP. II.

to be persecuted or punished by death or corporal infliction. He returns to his favourite position, that "we are not sure not to be deceived;" mingling this, in that inconsequent allocation of his proofs which frequently occurs in his writings, with other arguments of a different nature. The governors of the church, indeed, may condemn and restrain as far as their power extends, any false doctrine which encourages evil life, or destroys the foundations of religion; but if the church meddles farther with any matters of question, which have not this tendency, so as to dictate what men are to believe, she becomes tyrannical and uncharitable; the Apostles' creed being sufficient to conserve the peace of the church and the unity of her doctrine. And with respect to the civil magistrate, he concludes that he is bound to suffer the profession of different opinions, which are neither directly impious and immoral, nor disturb the public peace.

Inconsistency of one chapter.

59. The seventeenth chapter, in which Taylor professes to consider which among the sects of Christendom are to be tolerated, and in what degree, is written in a tone not easily reconciled with that of the rest. Though he begins by saying that diversity of opinions does more concern public peace than religion, it certainly appears in some passages, that on this pretext of peace, which with the magistrate has generally been of more influence than that of orthodoxy, he withdraws a great deal of that liberty of prophesying which he has been so broadly asserting. Punishment for religious tenets is doubtless not at all the same as restraint of separate worship; yet we are not pre-

pared for the shackles he seems inclined to throw over the latter. Laws of ecclesiastical discipline, which, in Taylor's age, were understood to be binding on the whole community, cannot, he holds, be infringed by those who take occasion to disagree, without rendering authority contemptible; and if there are any as zealous for obedience to the church, as others may be for their opinions against it, the toleration of the latter's disobedience may give offence to the former: an argument strange enough in this treatise! But Taylor is always more prone to accumulate reasons than to sift their efficiency. It is indeed, he thinks, worthy to be considered in framing a law of church discipline, whether it will be disliked by any who are to obey it; but, after it is once enacted, there seems no further indulgence practicable than what the governors of the church may grant to particular persons by dispensation. The laws of discipline are for the public good, and must not so far tolerate a violation of themselves as to destroy the good that the public ought to derive from them.*

CHAP. II.

His general defence of toleration.

60. I am inclined to suspect that Taylor, for some cause, interpolated this chapter after the rest of the treatise was complete. It has as little bearing upon, and is as inconsistent in spirit with, the following sections as with those that precede. To

* This single chapter is of itself conclusive against the truth of Taylor's own allegation that he wrote his Liberty of Prophesying in order to procure toleration for the episcopal church of England at the hands of those who had overthrown it. No one ever dreamed of refusing freedom of opinion to that church; it was only about public worship that any difficulty could arise. But, in truth, there is not one word in the whole treatise which could have been written with the view that Taylor pretends.

CHAP. II.

use a familiar illustration, the effect it produces on the reader's mind is like that of coming on deck at sea, and finding that, the ship having put about, the whole line of coast is reversed to the eye. Taylor however makes but a short tack. In the next section, he resumes the bold tone of an advocate for freedom; and, after discussing at great length the leading tenet of the Anabaptists, concludes that, resting as it does on such plausible though insufficient grounds, we cannot exclude it by any means from toleration, though they may be restrained from preaching their other notions of the unlawfulness of war, or of oaths, or of capital punishment; it being certain that no good religion teaches doctrines whose consequences would destroy all government. A more remarkable chapter is that in which Taylor concludes in favour of tolerating the Romanists, except when they assert the pope's power of deposing princes, or of dispensing with oaths. The result of all, he says, is this: "Let the prince and the secular power have a care the commonwealth be safe. For whether such or such a sect of Christians be to be permitted, is a question rather political than religious."

61. In the concluding sections he maintains the right of particular churches to admit all who profess the Apostles' creed to their communion, and of private men to communicate with different churches, if they require no unlawful condition. But "few churches, that have framed bodies of confession and articles, will endure any person that is not of the same confession; which is a plain demonstration that such bodies of confession and

articles do much hurt." "The guilt of schism may lie on him who least thinks it; he being rather the schismatic who makes unnecessary and inconvenient impositions, than he who disobeys them, because he cannot do otherwise without violating his conscience." * The whole treatise on the Liberty of Prophesying ends with the celebrated parable of Abraham, found, as Taylor says, "in the Jews' books," but really in an Arabian writer. This story Franklin, as every one now knows, rather unhandsomely appropriated to himself; and it is a strange proof of the ignorance as to our earlier literature which then prevailed, that for many years it continued to be quoted with his name. It was not contained in the first editions of the Liberty of Prophesying; and indeed the book from which Taylor is supposed to have borrowed it was not published till 1651. CHAP. II.

62. Such is this great pleading for religious moderation; a production not more remarkable in itself than for the quarter from which it came. In the polemical writings of Jeremy Taylor we generally find a staunch and uncompromising adherence to one party; and from the abundant use he makes of authority, we should infer that he felt a great veneration for it. In the Liberty of Prophesying, as has appeared by the general sketch, rather than analysis we have just given, there is a prevailing tinge of the contrary turn of mind, more striking than the comparison of insu-

* This is said also by Hales, in his tract on Schism, which was published some years before the Liberty of Prophesying. It is, however, what Taylor would have thought without a prompter.

CHAP. II.

lated passages can be. From what motives, and under what circumstances, this treatise was written, is not easily discerned. In the dedication to Lord Hatton of the collective edition of his controversial writings after the Restoration, he declares that "when a persecution did arise against the church of England, he intended to make a reservative for his brethren and himself, by pleading for a liberty to our consciences to persevere in that profession, which was warranted by all the laws of God and our superiors." It is with regret we are compelled to confess some want of ingenuousness in this part of Taylor's proceedings. No one reading the Liberty of Prophesying can perceive that it had the slightest bearing on any toleration that the episcopal church, in the time of the civil war, might ask of her victorious enemies. The differences between them were not on speculative points of faith, nor turning on an appeal to fathers and councils. That Taylor had another class of controversies in his mind is sufficiently obvious to the attentive reader, and I can give no proof in this place to any other.

Effect of this treatise.

63. This was the third blow that the new latitudinarian school of Leyden had aimed in England at the positive dogmatists, who, in all the reformed churches, as in that of Rome, laboured to impose extensive confessions of faith, abounding in inferences of scholastic theology, as conditions of exterior communion, and as peremptory articles of faith. Chillingworth and Hales were not less decisive; but the former had but in an incidental manner glanced at the subject, and the short tract on Schism had been rather deficient in proof

of its hardy paradoxes. Taylor therefore may be said to have been the first who sapped and shook the foundations of dogmatism and pretended orthodoxy; the first who taught men to seek peace in unity of spirit rather than of belief; and, instead of extinguishing dissent, to take away its sting by charity, and by a sense of human fallibility. The mind thus freed from bigotry is best prepared for the public toleration of differences in religion; but certainly the despotic and jealous temper of governments is not so well combated by Taylor as by later advocates of religious freedom.

64. In conducting his argument, he falls not unfrequently into his usual fault. Endowed with a mind of prodigious fertility, which a vast erudition rendered more luxuriant, he accumulates without selection whatever presents itself to his mind; his innumerable quotations, his multiplied reasonings, his prodigality of epithets and appositions, are poured along the interminable periods of his writings, with a frequency of repetition, sometimes of the same phrases, which leaves us to suspect that he revised but little what he had very rapidly composed. Certain it is that, in his different works, he does not quite adhere to himself; and it would be more desirable to lay this on the partial views that haste and impetuosity produce, than on a deliberate employment of what he knew to be insufficient reasoning. But I must acknowledge that Taylor's fairness does not seem his characteristic quality. Its defects

65. In some passages of the Liberty of Prophesying, he seems to exaggerate the causes of un-

CHAP. II.

certainty, and to take away from ecclesiastical antiquity even that moderate probability of truth which a dispassionate inquirer may sometimes assign to it. His suspicions of spuriousness and interpolation are too vaguely sceptical, and come ill from one who has no sort of hesitation, in some of his controversies, to allege as authority what he here sets aside with little ceremony. Thus, in the Defence of Episcopacy, published in 1642, he maintains the authenticity of the first fifty of the apostolic canons, all of which, in the Liberty of Prophesying, a very few years afterwards, he indiscriminately rejects. But this line of criticism was not then in so advanced a state as at present; and, from a credulous admission of every thing, the learned had come sometimes to more sweeping charges of interpolation and forgery than would be sustained on a more searching investigation. Taylor's language is so unguarded that he seems to leave the authenticity of all the fathers precarious. Doubtless there is a greater want of security as to books written before the invention of printing than we are apt to conceive, especially where independent manuscripts have not been found; but it is the business of a sagacious criticism, by the aid of internal or collateral evidence, to distinguish, not dogmatically as most are wont, but with a rational, though limited assent, the genuine remains of ancient writers from the incrustations of blundering or of imposture.

Great erudition of this period.

66. A prodigious reach of learning distinguishes the theologians of these fifty years, far greater than even in the sixteenth century; and also, if I am

not mistaken, more critical and pointed, though in these latter qualities it was afterwards surpassed. And in this erudition the Protestant churches, we may perhaps say, were upon the whole more abundant than that of Rome. But it would be unprofitable to enumerate works which we are incompetent to appreciate. Blondel, Daillé, and Salmasius on the continent, Usher in England, are the most conspicuous names. Blondel sustained the equality of the apostolic church both against the primacy of Rome, and the episcopacy for which the Anglicans contended; Salmasius and Daillé fought on the same side in that controversy. The writings of our Irish primate, Usher, who maintained the antiquity of his order, but not upon such high ground as many in England would have desired, are known for their extraordinary learning, in which he has perhaps never been surpassed by an English writer. But for judgment and calm appreciation of evidence, the name of Usher has not been altogether so much respected by posterity, as it was by his contemporaries. The church of Rome had its champions of less eminent renown: Gretser, perhaps the first among them, is not very familiar to our ears; but it is to be remembered, that some of the writings of Bellarmin fall within this period. The Dogmata Theologica of the jesuit Petavius, though but a compilation from the fathers and ancient councils, and not peculiarly directed against the tenets of the reformed, may deserve mention as a monument of useful labour.*

Usher, Petavius.

* The Dogmata Theologica is not a complete work; it extends only as far as the head of free-will. It belongs to the class of Loci Communes. Morhof, ii. 539.

CHAP. II.

Labbe, Sirmond, and several others, appear to range more naturally under the class of historical than theological writers. In mere ecclesiastical history — the records of events rather than opinions — this period was far more profound and critical than the preceding. The annals of Baronius were abridged and continued by Spondanus.

Sacred criticism.

67. A numerous list of writers in sacred criticism might easily be produced. Among the Romanists, Cornelius à Lapide has been extolled above the rest by his fellow-jesuit Andrès. His Commentaries, published from 1617 to 1642, are reckoned by others too diffuse; but he seems to have a fair reputation with Protestant critics.* The Lutherans extol Gerhard, and especially Glass, author of the Philologia Sacra, in hermeneutical theology. Rivet was the highest name among the Calvinists. Arminius, Episcopius, the Fratres Poloni, and indeed almost every one who had to defend a cause, found no course so ready, at least among Protestants, as to explain the Scriptures consistently with his own tenets. Two natives of Holland, opposite in character, in spirit, and principles of reasoning, and consequently the founders of opposite schools of disciples, stand out from the rest, — Grotius and Coccejus. Luther, Calvin, and the generality of Protestant interpreters in the sixteenth century had, in most instances, rejected with some contempt the allegorical and multifarious senses of scripture which had been introduced by the fathers, and had

Grotius, Coccejus.

* Andrès, Blount. Simon, however, says he is full of an erudition not to the purpose, which, as his Commentaries on the Scriptures run to twelve volumes, is not wonderful.

prevailed through the dark ages of the church. This adherence to the literal meaning was doubtless promoted by the tenet they all professed, the facility of understanding scripture. That which was designed for the simple and illiterate, was not to require a key to any esoteric sense. Grotius, however, in his Annotations on the Old and New Testament, published in 1633, — the most remarkable book of this kind that had appeared, and which has had a more durable reputation than any perhaps of its precursors, — carried the system of literal interpretation still farther, bringing great stores of illustrative learning from profane antiquity, but merely to elucidate the primary meaning, according to ordinary rules of criticism. Coccejus followed a wholly opposite course. Every passage, in his method, teemed with hidden senses; the narratives, least capable of any ulterior application, were converted into typical allusions, so that the Old Testament became throughout an enigmatical representation of the New. He was also remarkable for having viewed, more than any preceding writer, all the relations between God and man under the form of covenants, and introduced the technical language of jurisprudence into theology. This became a very usual mode of treating the subject in Holland, and afterwards in England. The Coccejans were numerous in the United Provinces, though not perhaps deemed quite so orthodox as their adversaries, who, from Gisbert Voet, a theologian of the most inflexible and polemical spirit, were denominated Voetians. Their disputes began a little before the middle of the century, and lasted till

CHAP. II.

nearly its close.* The Summa Doctrinæ of Coccejus appeared in 1648, and the Dissertationes Theologicæ of Voet in 1649.

English commentators.

68. England gradually took a prominent share in this branch of sacred literature. Among the divines of this period, comprehending the reigns of James and Charles, we may mention Usher, Gataker, Mede, Lightfoot, Jackson, Field, and Leigh.† Gataker stood, perhaps, next to Usher in general erudition. The fame of Mede has rested, for the most part, on his interpretations of the Apocalypse. This book had been little commented upon by the reformers; but in the beginning of the seventeenth century, several wild schemes of its application to present or expected events had been broached in Germany. England had also taken an active part, if it be true what Grotius tells us, that eighty books on the prophecies had been published here before 1640.‡ Those of Mede have been received with favour by later interpreters. Lightfoot, with extensive knowledge of the rabbinical writers, poured his copious stores on Jewish antiquities, preceded in this by a more obscure labourer in that region,

* Eichhorn, vi. pt. i. p. 264. Mosheim.

† "All confess," says Selden, in the Table-talk, "there never was a more learned clergy — no man taxes them with ignorance." In another place, indeed, he is represented to say, "The jesuits and the lawyers of France, and the Low Country-men have engrossed all learning; the rest of the world make nothing but homilies." As far as these sentences are not owing to difference of humour in the time of speaking, he seems to have taken learning in a larger sense the second time than the first. Of learning, not theological, the English clergy had no extraordinary portion.

‡ Si qua in re libera esse debet sententia, certè in vaticiniis, præsertim cum jam Protestantium libri prodierint fermè centum (in his octoginta in Anglia sola, ut mihi Anglici legati dixere,) super illis rebus, inter se plurimum discordes. Grot. Epist. 895.

Ainsworth. Jackson had a considerable name, but is little read, I suppose, in the present age. Field on the Church has been much praised by Coleridge; it is, as it seemed to me, a more temperate work in ecclesiastical theory than some have represented it to be, and written almost wholly against Rome. Leigh's Critica Sacra can hardly be reckoned, nor does it claim to be, more than a compilation from earlier theologians: it is an alphabetical series of words from the Hebrew and Greek Testaments, the author candidly admitting that he was not very conversant with the latter language.

Style of preaching.

69. The style of preaching before the Reformation had been often little else than buffoonery, and seldom respectable. The German sermons of Tauler, in the fourteenth century, are alone remembered. For the most part indeed the clergy wrote in Latin what they delivered to the multitude in the native tongue. A better tone began with Luther. His language was sometimes rude and low, but persuasive, artless, powerful. He gave many useful precepts, as well as examples, for pulpit eloquence. Melanchthon and several others, both in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as well in the Lutheran as the reformed church, endeavoured by systematic treatises to guide the composition of sermons. The former could not, however, withstand the formal, tasteless, and polemical spirit that overspread their theology. In the latter a superior tone is perceived. Of these, according to Eichhorn, the Swiss preachers were most simple and popular, the Dutch most learned and copious, the French had most taste and elo-

CHAP. II.

quence, the English most philosophy.* It is more than probable that in these characteristics he has meant to comprise the whole of the seventeenth century. Few continental writers, as far as I know, that belong to this its first moiety, have earned any remarkable reputation in this province of theology. In England several might be distinguished out of a large number. Sermons have been much more frequently published here than in any other country; and, from the beginning of the seventeenth century, form a large proportion of our theological literature. But it is of course not requisite to mention more than the very few which may be said to have a general reputation.

English sermons.

Of Donne

70. The sermons of Donne have sometimes been praised in late times. They are undoubtedly the productions of a very ingenious and a very learned man; and two folio volumes by such a person may be expected to supply favourable specimens. In their general character, they will not appear, I think, much worthy of being rescued from oblivion. The subtlety of Donne, and his fondness for such inconclusive reasoning, as a subtle disputant is apt to fall into, runs through all of these sermons at which I have looked. His learning he seems to have perverted in order to cull every impertinence of the fathers and schoolmen, their remote analogies, their strained allegories, their technical distinctions; and to these he has added much of a similar kind from his own fanciful understanding. In his theology, Donne appears often to incline to-

* Eichhorn, t. vi. part ii. p. 219. et post.

wards the Arminian hypotheses, which, in the last years of James and the first of his son, the period in which these sermons were chiefly preached, had begun to be accounted orthodox at court; but I will not vouch for his consistency in every discourse. Much, as usual in that age, is levelled against Rome: Donne was conspicuously learned in that controversy; and though he talks with great respect of antiquity, is not induced by it, like some of his Anglican contemporaries, to make any concession to the adversary.*

Of Jeremy Taylor.

71. The sermons of Jeremy Taylor are of much higher reputation; far indeed above any that had preceded them in the English church. An imagination essentially poetical, and sparing none of the decorations which, by critical rules, are deemed almost peculiar to verse; a warm tone of piety, sweetness, and charity; an accumulation of circumstantial accessories whenever he reasons, or persuades, or describes; an erudition pouring itself forth in quotation, till his sermons become in some places almost a garland of flowers from all other writers, and especially from those of classical antiquity, never before so redundantly scattered from the pulpit, distinguish Taylor from his contemporaries by their degree, as they do from most of his successors by their kind. His sermons on the

* Donne incurred some scandal by a book entitled Biathanatos, and considered as a vindication of suicide. It was published long after his death, in 1651. It is a very dull and pedantic performance, without the ingenuity and acuteness of paradox; distinctions, objections, and quotations from the rabble of bad authors whom he used to read, fill up the whole of it. It is impossible to find a less clear statement of argument on either side. No one would be induced to kill himself by reading such a book, unless he were threatened with another volume.

CHAP. II.

Marriage Ring, on the House of Feasting, on the Apples of Sodom, may be named without disparagement to others, which perhaps ought to stand in equal place. But they are not without considerable faults, some of which have just been hinted. The eloquence of Taylor is great, but it is not eloquence of the highest class; it is far too Asiatic, too much in the style of Chrysostom and other declaimers of the fourth century, by the study of whom he had probably vitiated his taste; his learning is ill-placed, and his arguments often as much so; not to mention that he has the common defect of alleging nugatory proofs; his vehemence loses its effect by the circuity of his pleonastic language; his sentences are of endless length, and hence not only altogether unmusical, but not always reducible to grammar. But he is still the greatest ornament of the English pulpit up to the middle of the seventeenth century; and we have no reason to believe, or rather much reason to disbelieve, that he had any competitor in other languages.

Devotional writings of Taylor

72. The devotional writings of Taylor, several of which belong to the first part of the century, are by no means of less celebrity or less value than his sermons. Such are the Life of Christ, the Holy Living and Dying, and the collection of meditations, called the Golden Grove. A writer as distinguished in works of practical piety was Hall.

and Hall.

His Art of Divine Meditation, his Contemplations, and indeed many of his writings, remind us frequently of Taylor. Both had equally pious and devotional tempers; both were full of learning, both fertile of illustration; both may be said to

have had strong imagination and poetical genius, though Taylor let his predominate a little more. Taylor is also rather more subtle and argumentative; his copiousness has more real variety. Hall keeps more closely to his subject, dilates upon it sometimes more tediously, but more appositely. In his sermons there is some excess of quotation and far-fetched illustration, but less than in those of Taylor. These two great divines resemble each other, on the whole, so much, that we might for a short time not discover which we were reading. I do not know that any third writer comes close to either. The Contemplations of Hall are among his most celebrated works. They are prolix, and and without much of that vivacity or striking novelty we meet with in the devotional writings of his contemporary, but are perhaps more practical and generally edifying.*

In the Roman

73. The religious treatises of this class, even those which by their former popularity, or their merit, ought to be mentioned in a regular history of theological literature, are too numerous for these pages. A mystical and ascetic spirit diffused itself more over religion, struggling sometimes, as in the Lutherans of Germany, against the formal orthodoxy of the church, but more often in subordination to its authority, and co-operating with its functions. The writings of St. Francis de Sales, titular bishop of Geneva, especially that on the Love of God, published in 1616, make a sort of

* Some of the moral writings of Hall were translated into French by Chevreau in the seventeenth century, and had much success. Niceron, xi. 348.

CHAP. II.

epoch in the devotional theology of the church of Rome. Those of St. Teresa, in the Spanish language, followed some years afterwards; they are altogether full of a mystical theopathy. But De Sales included charity in his scheme of divine love; and it is to him, as well as others of his age, that not only a striking revival of religion in France, which had been absolutely perverted or disregarded in the sixteenth century, was due, but a reformation in the practices of monastic life, which became more active and beneficent, with less of useless penance and asceticism than before. New institutions sprung up with the spirit of association, and all other animating principles of conventual orders, but free from the formality and torpor of the old.*

and Lutheran church.

74. Even in the German churches, rigid as they generally were in their adherence to the symbolical books, some voices from time to time were heard for a more spiritual and effective religion. Arndt's Treatise of True Christianity, in 1605, written on ascetic and devotional principles, and with some deviation from the tenets of the very orthodox Lutherans, may be reckoned one of the first protests against their barren forms of faith†; and the mystical theologians, if they had not run into such extravagances as did dishonour to their name, would have been accessions to the same side. The principal mystics or theosophists have generally been counted among philosophers, and will therefore find their place in the next chapter. The German

* Ranke, ii. 430.

† Eichhorn, vi. part i. p. 355. Biogr. Univ. Chalmers.

nation is constitutionally disposed to receive those forms of religion which address themselves to the imagination and the heart. Much therefore of this character has always been written, and become popular, in that language. Few English writings of the practical class, except those already mentioned, can be said to retain much notoriety. Those of George Herbert are best known; his Country Parson, which seems properly to fall within this description, is on the whole a pleasing little book; but the precepts are sometimes so overstrained, as to give an air of affectation.

Infidelity of some writers. Charron.

75. The disbelief in revelation, of which several symptoms had appeared before the end of the sixteenth century, became more remarkable afterwards both in France and England, involving several names not obscure in literary history. The first of these, in point of date, is Charron. The religious scepticism of this writer has not been generally acknowledged, and indeed it seems repugnant to the fact of his having written an elaborate defence of Christianity; yet we can deduce no other conclusion from one chapter in his most celebrated book, the Treatise on Wisdom. Charron is so often little else than a transcriber, that we might suspect him in this instance also to have drawn from other sources; which however would leave the same inference as to his own tenets, and I think this chapter has an air of originality.

Vanini.

76. The name of Charron, however, has not been generally associated with the charge of irreligion. A more audacious, and consequently more unfortunate writer was Lucilio Vanini, a native of

Italy, whose book De Admirandis Naturæ Reginæ Deæque Mortalium Arcanis, printed at Paris in 1616, caused him to be burned at the stake by a decree of the parliament of Toulouse in 1619. This treatise, as well as one that preceded it, Amphitheatrum Æternæ Providentiæ, Lyons, 1615, is of considerable rarity, so that there has been a question concerning the atheism of Vanini, which some have undertaken to deny.* In the Amphitheatrum I do not perceive any thing which leads to such an imputation, though I will not pretend to have read the whole of a book full of the unintelligible metaphysics of the later Aristotelians. It professes at least to be a vindication of the being and providence of the Deity. But the later work, which is dedicated to Bassompierre, and published with a royal privilege of exclusive sale for six years, is of a very different complexion. It is in sixty dialogues, the interlocutors being styled Alexander and Julius Cæsar, the latter representing Vanini himself. The far greater part of these dialogues relate to physical, but a few to theological subjects. In the fiftieth, on the religion of the heathens, he avows his disbelief of all religion, except such as nature, which is God, being the principle of motion, has planted in the hearts of man; every other being the figment of kings to keep their subjects in obedience, and of priests for their own lucre and honour†; observing plainly of his own

* Brucker, v. 678.

† In quanam religione verè et piè Deum coli vetusti philosophi existimârunt? In unica Naturæ lege, quam ipsa Natura, quæ Deus est (est enim principium motûs), in omnium gentium animis inscripsit; cæteras vero leges non nisi figmenta et illusiones esse asserebant, non a cacodæmone aliquo

Amphitheatrum, which is a vindication of providence, that he had said many things in it which he did not believe.* Vanini was infatuated with pre-

CHAP. II.

inductas, fabulosum namque illorum genus dicitur a philosophis, sed a principibus ad subditorum pædagogiam excogitatas, et a sacrificulis ob honoris et auri aucupium confirmatas, non miraculis, sed scriptura, cujus nec originale ullibi adinvenitur, quæ miracula facta recitet, et bonarum ac malarum actionum repromissiones polliceatur, in futura tamen vita, ne fraus detegi possit, p. 366.

* Multa in eo libro scripta sunt, quibus a me nulla præstatur fides. Così va il mondo. — ALEX. Non miror, nam ego crebris vernaculis hoc usurpo sermonibus: Questo mondo è una gabbia de' matti. Reges excipio et Pontifices. Nam de illis scriptum est: Cor Regis in manu Domini, &c. Dial. LVI. p. 428.

The concluding pages are enough to show with what justice Buhle and Tennemann have gravely recorded Vanini among philosophers. Quæso, mi Juli, tuam de animæ immortalitate sententiam explices. —J. C. Excusatum me habeas rogo. —AL. Cur ita?—J. C. Vovi Deo meo quæstionem hanc me non pertractaturum, antequam senex dives et germanus evasero. — AL. Dii tibi Nestoreos pro literariæ reipublicæ emolumento dies impertiant: vix trigesimum nunc attigisti annum et tot præclaræ eruditionis monumenta admirabili cum laude edidisti.—J. C. Quid hæc mihi prosunt?—AL. Celebrem tibi laudem comparârunt.—J. C. Omnes famæ rumusculos cum uno amasiæ basiolo commutandos plerique philosophi suadent. — AL. At alter ea perfrui potest.—J. C. Quid inde adimit? . . . .—AL. Uberrimos voluptatis fructus percepisti in Naturæ arcanis investigandis.—J. C. Corpus mihi est studiis enervatum exhaustumque; neque in hac humana caligine perfectam rerum cognitionem assequi possumus; cum ipsummet Aristotelem philosophorum Deum infinitis propemodum locis hallucinatum fuisse adverto, cumque medicam facultatem præ reliquis certissimam adhuc incertam et fallacem experior, subscribere cuperem Agrippæ libello quem de scientiarum vanitate conscripsit.—AL. Laborum tuorum præmium jam consecutus es; æternitati nomen jam consecrâsti. Quid jucundius in extremo tuæ ætatis curriculo accipere potes, quam hoc canticum? Et superest sine te nomen in orbe tuum.— J. C. Si animus meus una cum corpore, ut Athei fingunt, evanescat, quas ille ex fama post obitum delicias nansciscì poterit? Forsitan gloriolæ voculis, et fidiculis ad cadaveris domicilium pertrahatur? Si animus, ut credimus libenter et speramus, interitui non est obnoxius, et ad superos evolabit, tot ibi perfruetur cupediis et voluptatibus, ut illustres ac splendidas mundi pompas et laudationes nec pili faciat. Si ad purgatorias flammas descendet, gratior erit illi illius orationis, Dies iræ, dies illa, mulierculis gratissima recitatio, quam omnes Tulliani glossuli, dicendique lepores, quam subtilissimæ et pene divinæ Aristotelis ratiocinationes: si Tartareo, quod Deus avertat, perpetuo carceri emancipatur, nullum ibi solatium, nullam redemptionem inveniet. —AL. O utinam in adolescentiæ limine has rationes excepissem!

CHAP. II.

sumption, and, if he resembled Jordano Bruno in this respect, fell very short of his acuteness and apparent integrity. His cruel death, and perhaps the scarcity of his works, has given more celebrity to his name in literary history than it would otherwise have obtained.

Lord Herbert of Cherbury.

77. Lord Herbert of Cherbury, in his Treatise De Veritate, and still more in that De Religione Gentilium, has been justly deemed inimical to every positive religion. He admits indeed the possibility of immediate revelation from heaven, but denies that any tradition from others can have sufficient certainty. Five fundamental truths of natural religion he holds to be such as all mankind are bound to acknowledge, and damns those heathens who do not receive them as summarily as any theologian.*

—J. C. Præterita mala ne cogites, futura ne cures, præsentia fugias. —AL. Ah!—J. C. Liberaliter inspiras.—AL. Illius versiculi recordor. Perduto è tutto il tempo, che in amor non si spende.—J. C. Eja quoniam inclinato jam die ad vesperam perducta est disputatio (cujus singula verba divino Romanæ ecclesiæ oraculo, infallibilis cujus interpres a Spiritu sancto modo constitutus est Paulus V., serenissimæ Burghesiæ familiæ soboles, subjecta esse volumus, ita ut pro non dictis habeantur, si quæ forsitan sunt, quod vix crediderim, quæ illius placitis ad amussim non consentiant), laxemus paulisper animos, et a severitate ad hilaritatem risumque traducamus. Heus pueri! lusorias tabulas huc adferte. The wretched man, it seems, had not much reason to think himself a gainer by his speculations; yet he knew not that the worst was still behind.

* These five articles are — 1. Esse Deum summum.—2. Coli debere.—3. Virtutem pietatemque esse præcipuas partes cultûs divini.—4. Dolendum esse ob peccata, ab iisque resipiscendum.—5. Dari ex bonitate justitiaque divina præmium vel pœnam tum in hac vita, tum post hanc vitam..... Hisce quippe ubi superstitiones figmentaque commiscuerint, vel animas suas criminibus quæ nulla satis eluat pœnitentia, commaculaverint, a seipsis perditio propria, Deo vero summo in æternum sit gloria. De Religione Gentilium, cap. 1.

Grotius de Veritate.

78. The progress of infidelity in France did not fail to attract notice. It was popular in the court of Louis XIII., and, in a certain degree, in that of Charles I. But this does not belong to the history of literature. Among the writers who may have given some proofs of it we may reckon La Mothe le Vayer, Naudé, and Guy Patin.* The writings of Hobbes will be treated at length hereafter. It is probable that this sceptical spirit of the age gave rise to those vindications of revealed religion which were published in the present period. Among these the first place is due to the well-known and extensively circulated treatise of Grotius. This was originally sketched in Dutch verse, and intended for the lower classes of his countrymen. It was published in Latin in 1627.† Few, if any,

* La Mothe le Vayer has frequently been reckoned among those who carried their general scepticism into religion. And this seems a fair inference, unless the contrary can be shown; for those who doubt of what is most evident, will naturally doubt of what is less so. In La Mothe's fourth dialogue, under the name of Oratius Tubero, he pretends to speak of faith as a gift of God, and not founded on evidence; which was probably but the usual subterfuge. The Naudæana are full of broad intimations that the author was, as he expresses it, *bien deniaisé;* and Guy Patin's letters, except those near the end of his life, lead to a similar conclusion. One of them has certainly the appearance of implicating Gassendi, and has been quoted as such by Sir James Mackintosh, in his Dissertation on Ethical Philosophy. Patin tells us, that Naudé, Gassendi, and he were to sup together the following Sunday. Ce sera une débauche, mais philosophique, et peutêtre quelque chose d'avantage, pour être tous trois guéris du loup-garou, et être délivrés du mal des scrupules qui est le tyran des consciences, nous irons peutêtre jusque fort près du sanctuaire. Je fis l'an passé ce voyage de Gentilly avec M. Naudé, moy seul avec luy, tête-à-tête; il n'y avoit point de témoins, aussi n'y en faloit-il point; nous y parlâmes fort librement de tout, sans que personne en ait été scandalizé, p. 32. I should not, nevertheless, lay much stress on this letter in opposition to the many assertions of belief in religion which the writings of Gassendi contain. One of them indeed, quoted by Dugald Stewart, in note Q. to his first Dissertation, is rather suspicious, as going too far into a mystical strain for his extremely cold temperament.

† Niceron, vol. xix. Biogr. Univ.

CHAP. II.

books of the kind have been so frequently reprinted; but some parts being not quite so close and critical as the modern state of letters exacts, and the arguments against Jews and Mahometans seeming to occupy too much space, it is less read than formerly.

79. This is not a period in which many editions or versions of the Scriptures were published. The English translation of the Bible had been several times revised, or re-made, since the first edition by Tyndal and Coverdale. It finally assumed its present form under the authority of James I. Forty-seven persons, in six companies, meeting at Westminster, Oxford, and Cambridge, distributed the labour among them; twenty-five being assigned to the Old Testament, fifteen to the New, seven to the Apocrypha. The rules imposed for their guidance by the king were designed, as far as possible, to secure the text against any novel interpretation; the translation, called the Bishop's Bible, being established as the basis, as those still older had been in that; and the work of each person or company being subjected to the review of the rest. The translation, which was commenced in 1607, was published in 1611.*

Its style.

80. The style of this translation is in general so enthusiastically praised, that no one is permitted either to qualify or even explain the grounds of his approbation. It is held to be the perfection of our English language. I shall not dispute this proposition; but one remark as to a matter of fact cannot reasonably be censured, that, in consequence

* Fuller's Church History.

of the principle of adherence to the original versions which had been kept up ever since the time of Henry VIII., it is not the language of the reign of James I. It may, in the eyes of many, be a better English, but it is not the English of Daniel, or Raleigh, or Bacon, as any one may easily perceive. It abounds, in fact, especially in the Old Testament, with obsolete phraseology, and with single words long since abandoned, or retained only in provincial use. On the more important question, whether this translation is entirely, or with very trifling exceptions, conformable to the original text, it seems unfit to enter. It is one which is seldom discussed with all the temper and freedom from oblique views which the subject demands, and upon which, for this reason, it is not safe for those who have not had leisure or means to examine it for themselves, to take upon trust the testimony of the learned. A translation of the Old Testament was published at Douay in 1609, for the use of the English Catholics.

CHAP. III.

HISTORY OF SPECULATIVE PHILOSOPHY FROM 1600 TO 1650.

Sect. I.

Aristotelian Logic — Campanella — Theosophists — Lord Herbert of Cherbury — Gassendi's Remarks upon him.

CHAP. III.

Subjects of this chapter.

1. In the two preceding volumes, we have had occasion to excuse the heterogeneous character of the chapters that bear this title. The present is fully as much open to verbal criticism; and perhaps it is rather by excluding both moral and mathematical philosophy, that we give it some sort of unity, than from any close connexion in all the books that will come under our notice in the ensuing pages. But any tabular arrangement of literature, such as has often been attempted with no very satisfactory result, would be absolutely inappropriate to such a work as the present, which has already to labour with the inconvenience of more subdivisions than can be pleasing to the reader, and would interfere too continually with that general regard to chronology, without which the name of history seems incongruous. Hence the metaphysical inquiries that are conversant with the human mind, or with natural theology, the general principles of investigating truth, the comprehensive speculations of theoretical physics, subjects very distinct and not easily confounded

by the most thoughtless, must fall, with no more special distribution, within the contents of this chapter. But since during the period which it embraces, men arose, who have laid the foundations of a new philosophy, and thus have rendered it a great epoch in the intellectual history of mankind, we shall not very strictly, though without much deviation, follow a chronological order, and after reviewing some of the less important labourers in speculative philosophy, come to the names of three who have most influenced posterity, Bacon, Descartes, and Hobbes.

Aristotelians and Ramists.

2. We have seen in a former chapter how little progress had been made in this kind of philosophy during the sixteenth century. At its close the schools of logic were divided, though by no means in equal proportion, between the Aristotelians and the Ramists; the one sustained by ancient renown, by civil, or at least academical power, and by the common prejudice against innovation; the other deriving some strength from the love of novelty, and the prejudice against established authority, which the first age of the reformation had generated, and which continued, perhaps, to preserve a certain influence in the second. But neither from one nor the other had philosophy, whether in material or intellectual physics, much to hope; the disputations of the schools might be technically correct; but so little regard was paid to objective truth, or at least so little pains taken to ascertain it, that no advance in real knowledge signalised either of these parties of dialecticians. According, indeed, to a writer of this age, strongly attached to the

CHAP. III.

Aristotelian party, Ramus had turned all physical science into the domain of logic, and argued from words to things still more than his opponents.* Lord Bacon, in the bitterest language, casts on him a similar reproach.† It seems that he caused this branch of philosophy to retrograde rather than advance.

No improvement till near the end of the century.

3. It was obvious at all events, that from the universities, or from the church, in any country, no improvement in philosophy was to be expected; yet those who had strayed from the beaten track, a Paracelsus, a Jordan Bruno, even a Telesio, had but lost themselves in irregular mysticism, or laid down theories of their own, as arbitrary and destitute of proof as those they endeavoured to supersede. The ancient philosophers, and especially Aristotle, were, with all their errors and defects, far more genuine high-priests of nature than any moderns of the sixteenth century. But there was a better prospect at its close, in separate though very important branches of physical science. Gilbert, Kepler, Galileo, were laying the basis of

* Keckermann, Præcognita Logica, p. 129. This writer charges Ramus with plagiarism from Ludovicus Vives, placing the passages in apposition, so as to prove his case. Ramus, he says, never alludes to Vives. He praises the former, however, for having attacked the scholastic party, being himself a genuine Aristotelian.

† Ne vero, fili, cum hanc contra Aristotelem sententiam fero, me cum rebelli ejus quodam neoterico Petro Ramo conspirasse augurare. Nullum mihi commercium cum hoc ignorantiæ latibulo, perniciosissima literarum tinea, compendiorum patre, qui cum methodi suæ et compendii vinclis res torqueat et premat, res quidem, si qua fuit, elabitur protinus et exsilit; ipse vero aridas et desertissimas nugas stringit. Atque Aquinas quidam cum Scoto et sociis etiam in non rebus rerum varietatem effinxit, hic vero etiam in rebus non rerum solitudinem æquavit. Atque hoc hominis cum sit, humanos tamen usus in ore habet impudens, ut mihi etiam pro [præ?] sophistis prævaricari videatur. Bacon de Interpretatione Naturæ.

a true philosophy; and they, who do not properly belong to this chapter, laboured very effectually to put an end to all antiquated errors, and to check the reception of novel paradoxes.

CHAP. III.

Methods of the Universities.

4. We may cast a glance, meantime, on those universities which still were so wise in their own conceit, and maintained a kind of reputation by the multitude of their disciples. Whatever has been said of the scholastic metaphysicians of the sixteenth century, may be understood as being applicable to their successors during the present period. That method was by no means extinct, though the books which contain it are forgotten. In all that part of Europe which acknowledged the authority of Rome, and in all the universities which were swayed by the orders of Franciscans, Dominicans, and Jesuits, the metaphysics of the thirteenth century, the dialectics of the Peripatetic school, were still taught. If new books were written, as was frequently the case, they were written upon old systems. Brucker, who sometimes transcribes Morhof word for word, but frequently expands with so much more copiousness, that he may be presumed to have had a direct acquaintance with many of the books he mentions, has gone most elaborately into this unpropitious subject.* The chairs of philosophy in German universities, except where the Ramists had got possession of them, which was not very common, especially after the first years of this period, were occupied by avowed Aristotelians; so that if one should enumerate the professors of physics,

* Morhof, vol. ii. l. 1. c. 13, 14. Brucker, iv. cap. 2, 3.

CHAP. III.

metaphysics, logic, and ethics, down to the close of the century, he would be almost giving a list of strenuous adherents of that system.* One cause of this was the "Philippic method," or course of instruction in the philosophical books of Melancthon, more clear and elegant, and better arranged than that of Aristotle himself or his commentators. But this, which long continued to prevail, was deemed by some too superficial, and tending to set aside the original authority. Brucker however admits, what seems at least to limit some of his expressions as to the prevalence of Peripateticism, that many reverted to the scholastic metaphysics, which raised its head about the beginning of the seventeenth century, even in the protestant regions of Germany. The universities of Altdorf and Helmstadt were the chief nurseries of the genuine Peripateticism.†

Scholastic writers.

5. Of the metaphysical writers whom the older philosophy brought forth we must speak with much ignorance. Suarez of Granada is justly celebrated for some of his other works; but of his Metaphysical Disputations, published at Mentz, in 1614, in two folio volumes, and several times afterwards, I find no distinct character in Morhof or Brucker. They both, especially the former, have praised Lalemandet, a Franciscan, whose Decisiones Philosophicæ, on logic, physics, and metaphysics, appeared at Munich, in 1644 and 1645. Lalemandet, says Morhof, has well stated the questions between the Nominalist and Realist parties; observing that the difference between them is like that of a man who casts up a sum of money by figures,

* Brucker, iv. 243.

† Id. pp. 248—253.

and one who counts the coins themselves.* This, however, seems no very happy illustration of the essential points of controversy. Vasquez, Tellez, and several more names, without going for the present below the middle of the century, may be found in the two writers quoted. Spain was peculiarly the nurse of these obsolete and unprofitable metaphysics.

6. The Aristotelian philosophy, unadulterated by the figments of the schoolmen, had eminent upholders in the Italian universities, especially in that of Padua. Cæsar Cremonini taught in that famous city till his death in 1630. Fortunio Liceto, his successor, was as staunch a disciple of the Peripatetic sect. We have a more full account of these men from Gabriel Naudé, both in his recorded conversation, the Naudæana, and in a volume of letters, than from any other quarter. His twelfth letter, especially, enters into some detail as to the state of the university of Padua, to which, for the purpose of hearing Cremonini, he had repaired in 1625. He does not much extol its condition; only Cremonini and one more were deemed by him safe teachers: the rest were mostly of a common class; the lectures were too few, and the vacations too long. He observes, as one might at this day, the scanty population of the city compared with its size, the grass growing and the birds singing in the streets, and, what we should not find now to be the case, the "general custom of Italy, which keeps women perpetually locked up in their chambers,

* Morhof, vol. ii. lib. i. cap. 14. sect. 15. Brucker, iv. 129.

CHAP. III.

like birds in cages."* Naudé in many of these letters speaks in the most panegyrical terms of Cremonini†, and particularly for his standing up almost alone in defence of the Aristotelian philosophy, when Telesio, Patrizi, Bruno, and others had been propounding theories of their own. Licetus, the successor of Cremonini, maintained, he afterwards informs us, with little support the Peripatetic verity. It is probable that, by this time, Galileo, a more powerful adversary than Patrizi and Telesio, had drawn away the students of physical philosophy from Aristotle; nor did Naudé himself long continue in the faith he had imbibed from Cremonini. He became the intimate friend of Gassendi, and embraced a better system without repugnance, though he still kept up his correspondence with Licetus.

Treatises on logic.

7. Logic had never been more studied, according to a writer who has given a sort of history of the science about the beginning of this period, than in the preceding age; and in fact he enumerates above fifty treatises on the subject, between the time of Ramus and his own.‡ The Ramists, though of little importance in Italy, in Spain, and even in France, had much influence in Germany, England, and Scotland.§ None however of the logical works of the sixteenth century obtained such reputation as those by Smiglecius, Burgersdicius, and our countryman Crakanthorp, all of whom flourished, if we may use such a word for those who

* Naudæi Epistolæ, p. 52. (edit. 1667.)

† P. 27, et alibi sæpius.

‡ Keckermann, Præcognita Logica, p. 110. (edit. 1606.)

§ Id. p. 147.

bore no flowers, in the earlier part of the next age. As these men were famous in their generation, we may presume that they at least wrote better than their predecessors. But it is time to leave so jejune a subject, though we may not yet be able to produce what is much more valuable.

Campanella;

8. The first name, in an opposite class, that we find in descending from the sixteenth century, is that of Thomas Campanella, whose earliest writings belong to it. His philosophy being wholly dogmatical, must be classed with that of the paradoxical innovators whom he followed and eclipsed. Campanella, a Dominican friar, and like his master Telesio, a native of Cosenza, having been accused, it is uncertain how far with truth, of a conspiracy against the Spanish government of his country, underwent an imprisonment of twenty-seven years; during which almost all his philosophical treatises were composed and given to the world. Ardent and rapid in his mind, and, as has just been seen, not destitute of leisure, he wrote on logic, physics, metaphysics, morals, politics, and grammar. Upon all these subjects his aim seems to have been to recede as far as possible from Aristotle. He had early begun to distrust this guide, and had formed a noble resolution to study all schemes of philosophy, comparing them with their archetype, the world itself, that he might distinguish how much exactness was to be found in those several copies, as they ought to be, from one autograph of nature.*

* Cypriani Vita Campanellæ, p. 7.

CHAP. III.

his theory taken from Telesio;

9. Campanella borrowed his primary theorems from Telesio, but enlarged that Parmenidean philosophy by the invention of his own fertile and imaginative genius. He lays down the fundamental principle, that the perfectly wise and good Being has created certain signs and types (statuas atque imagines) of himself, all of which, severally as well as collectively, represent power, wisdom, and love, and the objects of these, namely, existence, truth, and excellence, with more or less evidence. God first created space, the basis of existence, the primal substance, an immovable and incorporeal capacity of receiving body. Next he created matter without form or figure. In this corporeal mass God called to being two workmen, incorporeal themselves, but incapable of subsisting apart from body, the organs of no physical forms, but of their maker alone. These are heat and cold, the active principles diffused through all things. They were enemies from the beginning, each striving to occupy all material substances itself; each therefore always contending with the other, while God foresaw the great good that their discord would produce.* The heavens, he says in another passage, were formed by heat out of attenuated matter, the earth by cold out of condensed matter;

* In hac corporea mole tantæ materia statuæ, dixit Deus, ut nascerentur fabri duo incorporei, sed non potentes nisi a corpore subsistere, nullarum physicarum formarum organa, sed formatoris tantummodo. Idcirco nati calor et frigus, principia activa principalia, ideoque suæ virtutis diffusiva. Statim inimici fuerunt mutuo, dum uterque cupit totam substantiam materialem occupare. Hinc contra se invicem pugnare cœperunt, providente Deo ex hujusmodi discordia ingens bonum. Philosophia Realis Epilogistica (Frankfort, 1623), sect. 4.

CHAP. III.

the sun, being a body of heat, as he rolls round the earth, attacks the colder substance, and converts part of it into air and vapour.* This last part of his theory Campanella must have afterwards changed in words, when he embraced the Copernican system.

Notion of universal sensibility.

10. He united to this physical theory another, not wholly original, but enforced in all his writings with singular confidence and pertinacity, the sensibility of all created beings. All things, he says, feel; else would the world be a chaos. For neither would fire tend upwards, nor stones downwards, nor waters to the sea; but every thing would remain where it was, were it not conscious that destruction awaits it by remaining amidst that which is contrary to itself, and that it can only be preserved by seeking that which is of a similar nature. Contrariety is necessary for the decay and reproduction of nature; but all things strive against their contraries, which they could not do, if they did not perceive what is their contrary.† God, who is primal power, wisdom, and love, has bestowed on all things the power of existence, and so much wisdom and love as is necessary for their conservation during that time only for which his providence has

* This is in the Compendium de Rerum Natura pro Philosophia humana, published by Adami in 1617. In his Apology for Galileo, in 1622, Campanella defends the Copernican system, and says that the modern astronomers think they cannot construct good ephemerides without it.

† Omnia ergo sentiunt; alias mundus esset chaos. Ignis enim non sursum tenderet, nec aquæ in mare, nec lapides deorsum; sed res omnis ubi primo reperiretur, permaneret, cum non sentiret sui destructionem inter contraria nec sui conservationem inter similia. Non esset in mundo generatio et corruptio nisi esset contrarietas, sicut omnes physiologi affirmant. At si alterum contrarium non sentiret alterum sibi esse contrarium, contra ipsum non pugnaret. Sentiunt ergo singula. De Sensu Rerum, l. i. c. 4.

CHAP. III.

determined that they shall be. Heat therefore has power, and sense, and desire of its own being; so have all other things, seeking to be eternal like God, and in God they are eternal, for nothing dies before him, but is only changed.* Even to the world, as a sentient being, the death of its parts is no evil, since the death of one is the birth of many. Bread that is swallowed dies to revive as blood, and blood dies, that it may live again in our flesh and bones; and thus as the life of man is compounded out of the deaths and lives of all his parts, so is it with the whole universe.† God said, Let all things feel, some more, some less, as they have more or less necessity to imitate my being. And let them desire to live in that which they understand to be good for them, lest my creation should come to nought.‡

His imagination and eloquence.

11. The strength of Campanella's genius lay in his imagination, which raises him sometimes to

* Igitur ipse Deus, qui est prima potentia, prima sapientia, primus amor, largitus est rebus omnibus potentiam vivendi, et sapientiam et amorem quantum sufficit conservationi ipsarum in tanto tempore necessariæ, quantum determinavit ejus mens pro rerum regimine in ipso ente, nec præteriri potest. Calor ergo potest, sentit amat esse; ita et res omnis, cupitque æternari sicut Deus, et Deo res nulla moritur, sed solummodo mutatur, &c. l. ii. c. 26.

† Non est malus ignis in suo esse; terræ autem malus videtur, non autem mundo; nec vipera mala est, licet homini sit mala. Ita de omnibus idem prædico. Mors quoque rei unius si nativitas est multarum rerum, mala non est. Moritur panis manducatus, ut fiat sanguis, et sanguis moritur, ut in carnem nervos et ossa vertatur ac vivat; neque tamen hoc universo displicet animali, quamvis partibus mors ipsa, hoc est, transmutatio dolorifica sit, displiceatque. Ita utilis est mundo transmutatio eorum particularium noxia displicensque illis. Totus homo compositus est ex morte ac vita partialibus, quæ integrant vitam humanam. Sic mundus totus ex mortibus ac vitabus compositus est, quæ totius vitam efficiunt. Philosop. Realis, c. 10.

‡ Sentiant alia magis, alia minus, prout magis minusque opus habent, et me imitentur in essendo. Ibidem ament omnia vivere in proprio esse præcognito ut bono, ne corruat factura mea. Id. c. 10.

flights of impressive eloquence on this favourite theme. The sky and stars are endowed with the keenest sensibility; nor is it unreasonable to suppose that they signify their mutual thoughts to each other by the transference of light, and that their sensibility is full of pleasure. The blessed spirits that inform such living and bright mansions behold all things in nature and in the divine ideas; they have also a more glorious light than their own, through which they are elevated to a supernatural beatific vision.* We can hardly read this, without recollecting the most sublime passage, perhaps, in Shakspeare: —

> "Sit, Jessica; look how the vault of heaven
> Is thick inlayed with patins of bright gold.
> There's not the smallest orb, that thou behold'st,
> But in its motion like an angel sings,
> Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubim;
> Such harmony is in immortal souls.
> But while this muddy vesture of decay
> Does grossly close us in, we cannot hear it." †

12. The world is full of living spirits, he proceeds; and when the soul shall be delivered from this dark cavern, we shall behold their subtle essences. But now we cannot discern the forms of the air, and the winds as they rush by us; much less the angels and dæmons who people them. Miserable as we are, we recognize no other sensation than that which we observe in animals and plants, slow and half extinguished, and buried

* Animæ beatæ habitantes sic vivas lucidasque mansiones, res naturales vident omnes divinasque ideas, habent quoque lumen gloriosius quo elevantur ad visionem supernaturalem beatificam, et veluti apud nos luces plurimæ sese mutuo tangunt, intersecant, decussant, sentiuntque, ita in cœlo luces distinguuntur, uniuntur, sentiunt. De Sensu Rerum, l. iii. c. 4.

† Merchant of Venice, Act V.

CHAP. III.

under a weight that oppresses it. We will not understand that all our actions and appetites and motions and powers flow from heaven. Look at the manner in which light is diffused over the earth, penetrating every part of it with endless variety of operation, which we must believe that it does not perform without exquisite pleasure.* And hence there is no vacuum in nature, except by violent means; since all bodies delight in mutual contact, and the world no more desires to be rent in its parts than an animal.

13. It is almost a descent in Campanella from these visions of the separate sensibility of nature in each particle, when he seizes hold of some physical fact or analogy to establish a subordinate and less paradoxical part of his theory. He was much pleased with Gilbert's treatise on the magnet, and thought it of course a proof of the animation of the earth. The world is an animal, he says, sentient as a whole, and enjoying life in all its parts.† It is not surprising that he ascribes intelligence to plants; but he here remarks that we find the male and female sexes in them, and that the latter can-

* Prætervolant in conspectu nostro venti et aer, at nihil eos videmus, multo minus videmus Angelos Dæmonasque, quorum plenus est mundus.

Infelices qui sensum alium nullum agnoscimus, nisi obtusum animalium plantarumque, tardum, demortuum aggravatum; sepultum: nec quidem intelligere volumus omnem actionem nostram et appetitum et sensum et motum et vim a cœlo manare. Ecce lux quanto acutissimo expanditur sensu super terram, quo multiplicatur, generatur, amplificatur, idque non sine magna efficere voluptate existimanda est. l. iii. c. 5.

Campanella used to hear, as he tells us, whenever any evil was impending, a voice calling him by his name, sometimes with other words; he doubted whether this were his proper dæmon, or the air itself speaking. It is not wonderful that his imagination was affected by length of confinement.

† Mundum esse animal, totum sentiens, omnesque portiones ejus communi gaudere vita. l. i. c. 9.

not fructify without the former. This is manifest in siliquose plants and in palms (which on this account he calls in another place the wiser plants, plantæ sapientiores), in which the two kinds incline towards each other for the purpose of fructification.*

His works published by Adami.

14. Campanella, when he uttered from his Neapolitan prison these dulcet sounds of fantasy, had the advantage of finding a pious disciple who spread them over other parts of Europe. This was Tobias Adami, initiated, as he tells us, in the same mysteries as himself (nostræ philosophiæ symmysta), who dedicated to the philosophers of Germany his own Prodromus Philosophiæ Instauratio, prefixed to his edition of Campanella's Compendium de Rerum Natura, published at Frankfort in 1617. Most of the other writings of the master seem to have preceded this edition; for Adami enumerates them in his Prodromus. Campanella did not fully obtain his liberty till 1629, and died some years afterwards in France, where he had experienced the kindness of Peiresc, and the patronage of Richelieu. His philosophy made no very deep impression; it was too fanciful, too arbitrary, too much tinctured with marks of an imagination rendered morbid by solitude, to gain many proselytes in an age that was advancing in severe science. Gassendi, whose good nature led him to receive Campanella,

* Inveniemus in plantis sexum masculinum et fœmininum, ut in animalibus, et fœminam non fructificare sine masculi congressu. Hoc patet in siliquis et in palmis, quarum mas fœminaque inclinantur mutuo alter in alterum et sese osculantur, et fœmina *impregnatur*, nec fructificat sine mare; immo conspicitur dolens, squalida mortuaque, et pulvere illius et odore reviviscit.

CHAP. III.

oppressed by poverty and ill usage, with every courteous attention, was of all men the last to be seduced by his theories. No one, probably, since Campanella, aspiring to be reckoned among philosophers, has ventured to assert so much on matters of high speculative importance and to prove so little. Yet he seems worthy of the notice we have taken of him, if it were only as the last of the mere dogmatists in philosophy. He is doubtless much superior to Jordano Bruno, and I should presume, except in mathematics, to Cardan.*

Basson.

15. A less important adversary of the established theory in physics was Sebastian Basson, in his "Philosophiæ Naturalis adversus Aristotelem libri XII., in quibus abstrusa veterum physiologia restauratur, et Aristotelis errores solidis rationibus refelluntur. Genevæ, 1621." This book shows great animosity against Aristotle, to whom, as Lord Bacon has himself insinuated, he allows only the credit of having preserved fragments of the older philosophers, like pearls in mud. It is difficult to give an account of this long work. In some places we perceive signs of a just philosophy; but in general his explanations of physical phænomena seem as bad as those of his opponents, and he displays no acquaintance with the writings and the discoveries of his great contemporaries. We find also some geometrical paradoxes; and in treating of astronomy he writes as if he had never heard of the Copernican system.

Berigard.

16. Claude Berigard, born at Moulins, became

* Brucker (vol. v. p. 106—114.) has given a laborious analysis of the philosophy of Campanella.

professor of natural philosophy at Pisa and Padua. In his Circuli Pisani, published in 1643, he attempted to revive, as it is commonly said, the Ionic or corpuscular philosophy of Anaxagoras, in opposition to the Aristotelian. The book is rare; but Brucker, who had seen it, seems to have satisfactorily repelled the charge of atheism, brought by some against Berigard.* Another Frenchman domiciled in Italy, Magnen, trod nearly the same path as Berigard, professing, however, to follow the modification of the corpuscular theory introduced by Democritus.† It seems to be observable as to these writers, Basson and the others, that coming with no sufficient knowledge of what had recently been discovered in mathematical and experimental science, and following the bad methods of the universities, even when they deviated from their usual doctrines, dogmatizing and asserting when they should have proved, arguing synthetically from axioms, and never ascending from particular facts, they could do little good to philosophy, except by contributing, so far as they might be said to have had any influence, to shake the authority of Aristotle.

Magnen.

17. This authority, which at least required but the deference of modest reason to one of the greatest of mankind, was ill exchanged, in any part of science, for the unintelligible dreams of the school of Paracelsus, which had many disciples in

Paracelsists

* Brucker, iv. 460. Niceron, xxxi., where he is inserted by the name of Beauregard, which is probably more correct, but against usage.

† Brucker (p. 501.) thinks that Magnen misunderstood the atomic theory of Democritus, and substituted one quite different in his Democritus reviviscens, published in 1646.

CHAP. III.

Germany, and a very few in England. Germany indeed has been the native soil of mysticism in Europe. The tendency to reflex observation of the mind, characteristic of that people, has exempted them from much gross error, and given them insight into many depths of truth, but at the expense of some confusion, some liability to self-deceit, and to some want of strictness in metaphysical reasoning. It was accompanied by a profound sense of the presence of Deity; yet one which, acting on their thoughtful spirits, became rather an impression than an intellectual act, and settled into a mysterious indefinite theopathy, when it did not even evaporate in pantheism.

and Theosophists.

18. The founder, perhaps, of this sect was Tauler of Strasburg, in the fourteenth century, whose sermons in the native language, which however are supposed to have been translated from Latin, are full of what many have called by the vague word mysticism, an intense aspiration for the union of the soul with God. An anonymous work generally entitled The German Theology, written in the fifteenth century, pursues the same track of devotional thought. It was a favourite book with Luther, and was translated into Latin by Castalio.* These indeed are to be considered chiefly as theological; but the study of them led readily to a state of mental emotion, wherein a dogmatic pseudo-philosophy, like that of Paracelsus, abounding with assertions that imposed on the imagination, and appealing frequently both to scrip-

* Episcopius places the author of the Theologia Germanica, with Henry Nicolas and David George, among mere enthusiasts.

tural authority and the evidence of inward light, was sure to be favourably received. The mystics, therefore, and the theosophists belonged to the same class, and it is not uncommon to use the names indifferently.

Fludd.

19. It may appear not here required to dwell on a subject scarcely falling under any province of literary history, but two writers within this period have been sufficiently distinguished to deserve mention. One of these was Robert Fludd, an English physician, who died in 1637; a man of indefatigable diligence in collecting the dreams and follies of past ages, blending them in a portentous combination with new fancies of his own. The Rabbinical and Cabbalistic authors, as well as the Paracelsists, the writers on magic, and whatever was most worthy to be rejected and forgotten, form the basis of his creed. Among his numerous works the most known was his "Mosaic Philosophy," in which, like many before his time as well as since, he endeavoured to build a scheme of physical philosophy on the first chapters in Genesis. I do not know whether he found there his two grand principles or forces of nature; a northern force of condensation, and a southern force of dilatation. These seem to be the Parmenidean cold and heat, expressed in a jargon affected in order to make dupes. In peopling the universe with dæmons, and in ascribing all phænomena to their invisible agency, he pursued the steps of Agrippa and Paracelsus, or rather of the the whole school of fanatics and impostors called magical. He took also from older writers the doctrine of a constant analogy between universal

CHAP. III.

nature, or the macrocosm, and that of man, or the microcosm; so that what was known in one might lead us to what was unknown in the other.* Fludd possessed, however, some acquaintance with science, especially in chemistry and mechanics; and his rhapsodies were so far from being universally contemned in his own age, that Gassendi thought it not unworthy of him to enter into a prolix confutation of the Fluddian philosophy.†

Jacob Behmen.

20. Jacob Behmen, or rather Boehm, a shoemaker of Gorlitz, is far more generally familiar to our ears than his contemporary Fludd. He was however much inferior to him in reading, and in fact seems to have read little but the Bible and the writings of Paracelsus. He recounts the visions and ecstasies during which a supernatural illumination had been conveyed to him. It came indeed without the gift of transferring the light to others; for scarce any have been able to pierce the clouds in which his meaning has been charitably presumed to lie hid. The chief work of Behmen is his Aurora, written about 1612, and containing a record of the visions wherein the mysteries of nature were revealed to him. It was not published till 1641. He is said to have been a man of great goodness of heart, which his writings display; but, in literature, this cannot give a sanction to the incoherencies of madness. His language, as far as I

* This was a favourite doctrine of Paracelsus. Campanella was much too fanciful not to embrace it. Mundus, he says, habet spiritum qui est cœlum, crassum corpus quod est terra, sanguinem qui est mare. Homo igitur compendium epilogusque mundi est. De Sensu Rerum, l. ii. c. 32.

† Brucker, iv. 691. Buhle, iii. 157.

have seen any extracts from his works, is coloured with the phraseology of the alchemists and astrologers; as for his philosophy, so to style it, we find, according to Brucker, who has taken some pains with the subject, manifest traces of the system of emanation, so ancient and so attractive; and from this and several other reasons, he is inclined to think the unlearned shoemaker of Gorlitz must have had assistance from men of more education in developing his visions.* But the emanative theory is one into which a mind absorbed in contemplation may very naturally fall. Behmen had his disciples, which such enthusiasts rarely want; and his name is sufficiently known to justify the mention of it even in philosophical history.

Lord Herbert De Veritate.

21. We come now to an English writer of a different class, little known as such at present, but who, without doing much for the advancement of metaphysical philosophy, had at least the merit of devoting to it with a sincere and independent spirit the leisure of high rank, and of a life not obscure in the world,—Lord Herbert of Cherbury. The principal work of this remarkable man is his Latin treatise, published in 1624, "On Truth as it is distinguished from Revelation, from Probability, from Possibility, and from Falsehood." Its object is to inquire what are the sure means of discerning and discovering truth. This, as, like other authors, he sets out by proclaiming, had been hitherto done by no one, and he treats both ancient and modern philosophers rather haughtily, as being men tied to particular opinions, from which they dare not

* Brucker, iv. 698.

CHAP. III.

depart. "It is not from an hypocritical or mercenary writer, that we are to look for perfect truth. Their interest is not to lay aside their mask, or think for themselves. A liberal and independent author alone will do this."* So general an invective, after Lord Bacon, and indeed after others, like Campanella, who could not be charged with following any conceits rather than their own, bespeaks either ignorance of philosophical literature, or a supercilious neglect of it.

His axioms.

22. Lord Herbert lays down seven primary axioms. 1. Truth exists: 2. It is coeval with the things to which it relates: 3. It exists everywhere: 4. It is self-evident:† 5. There are as many truths, as there are differences in things: 6. These differences are made known to us by our natural faculties: 7. There is a truth belonging to these truths: "Est veritas quædam harum veritatum." This axiom he explains as obscurely, as it is strangely expressed. All truth he then distinguishes into the truth of the thing or object, the truth of the appearance, the truth of the perception, and the truth of the understanding. The truth of the object is the inherent conformity of the object with itself, or that which makes every thing what it is.‡ The truth of appearance is the

* Non est igitur a larvato aliquo vel stipendioso scriptore ut verum consummatum opperiaris: Illorum apprime interest ne personam deponant, vel aliter quidem sentiant. Ingenuus et sui arbitrii ista solummodo præstabit auctor. Epist. ad Lectorem.

† Hæc veritas est in se manifesta. He observes that what are called false appearances, are true as such, though not true according to the reality of the object: sua veritas apparentiæ falsæ inest, verè enim ita apparebit, vera tamen ex veritate rei non erit.

‡ Inhærens illa conformitas rei cum seipsa, sive illa ratio, ex qua res unaquæque sibi constat.

conditional conformity of the appearance with the object. The truth of perception is the conditional conformity of our senses (facultates nostras prodromas) with the appearances of things. The truth of understanding is the due conformity between the aforesaid conformities. All truth therefore is conformity, all conformity relation. Three things are to be observed in every inquiry after truth; the thing or object, the sense or faculty, and the laws or conditions by which its conformity or relation is determined. Lord Herbert is so obscure, partly by not thoroughly grasping his subject, partly by writing in Latin, partly perhaps by the "sphalmata et errata in typographo, quædam fortasse in seipso," of which he complains at the end, that it has been necessary to omit several sentences as unintelligible, though what I have just given is far enough from being too clear.

Conditions of truth.

23. Truth, he goes on to say, exists as to the object, or outward thing itself, when our faculties are capable of determining every thing concerning it; but though this definition is exact, it is doubtful whether any such truth exists in nature. The first condition of discerning truth in things, is that they should have a relation to ourselves; (ut intra nostram stet analogiam) since multitudes of things may exist which the senses cannot discover. The three chief conditions of this condition seem to be: 1. That it should be of a proper size, neither immense, nor too small; 2. That it should have its determining difference, or principle of individuation, to distinguish it from other things; 3. That

CHAP. III.

it should be accommodated to some sense or perceptive faculty. These are the universally necessary conditions of truth (that is of knowledge) as it regards the object. The truth of appearance depends on others, which are more particular; as that the object should be perceived for a sufficient time, through a proper medium, at a due distance, in a proper situation.* Truth of perception is conditional also, and its conditions are, that the sense should be sound, and the attention directed towards it. Truth of understanding depends on the κοιναι εννοιαι, the common notions possessed by every man of sane mind, and implanted by nature. The understanding teaches us by means of these, that infinity and eternity exist, though our senses cannot perceive them. The understanding deals also with universals, and truth is known as to universals, when the particulars are rightly apprehended.

Instinctive truths.

24. Our faculties are as numerous as the differences of things; and thus it is, that the world corresponds by perfect analogy to the human soul, degrees of perception being as much distinct from one another as different modes of it. All our powers may however be reduced to four heads; natural instinct, internal perception, external sensation, and reason. What is not known by one of these four means, cannot be known at all. Instinctive truths are proved by universal consent. Here he

* Lord Herbert defines appearance, icetypum, seu forma vicaria rei, quæ sub conditionibus istis cum prototypo suo conformata, cum conceptu denuo sub conditionibus etiam suis, conformari et modo quodam spirituali, tanquam ab objecto decisa, etiam in objecti absentia conservari potest.

comes to his general basis of religion, maintaining the existence of κοιναι εννοιαι or common notions of mankind on that subject, principles against which no one can dispute, without violating the laws of his nature.* Natural instinct he defines to be an act of those faculties existing in every man of sane mind, by which the common notions as to the relations of things not perceived by the senses, (rerum internarum) and especially such as tend to the conservation of the individual, of the species, and of the whole, are formed without any process of reasoning. These common notions, though excited in us by the objects of sense, are not conveyed to us by them; they are implanted in us by nature, so that God seems to have imparted to us not only a part of his image, but of his wisdom.† And whatever is understood and perceived by all men alike deserves to be accounted one of these notions. Some of them are instinctive, others are deduced from such as are. The former are distinguishable by six marks; priority, independence, universality, certainty, so that no man can doubt them without putting off as it were his nature, necessity, that is, usefulness for the preservation of man, lastly, intuitive apprehension, for these common notions do not require to be inferred.‡

Internal perceptions.

25. Internal perceptions denote the conformity of objects with those faculties existing in every

* Principia illa sacrosancta, contra quæ disputare nefas. p. 44. I have translated this in the best sense I could give it; but to use *fas* or *nefas*, before we have defined their meaning, or proved their existence, is but indifferent logic.

† p. 48. ‡ p. 60.

CHAP. III.

man of sane mind, which being developed by his natural instinct, are conversant with the internal relations of things, in a secondary and particular manner, and by means of natural instinct.* By this ill-worded definition he probably intends to distinguish the general power, or instinctive knowledge, from its exercise and application in any instance. But I have found it very difficult to follow Lord Herbert. It is by means, he says, of these internal senses that we discern the nature of things in their intrinsic relations, or hidden types of being.† And it is necessary well to distinguish the conforming faculty in the mind or internal perception, from the bodily sense. The cloudiness of his expression increases as we proceed, and in many pages I cannot venture to translate or abridge it. The injudicious use of a language in which he did not write with facility, and which is not very well adapted, at the best, to metaphysical disquisition, has doubtless increased the perplexity into which he has thrown his readers.

Five natural of natural religion.

26. In the conclusion of this treatise, Herbert lays down the five common notions of natural religion, implanted, as he conceives, in the breasts of all mankind. 1. That there is a God; 2. That he ought to be worshipped; 3. That virtue and piety are the chief parts of worship; 4. That we are to repent and turn from our sins; 5. That there are rewards and punishments in another

* Sensus interni sunt actus conformitatum objectorum cum facultatibus illis in omni homine sano et integro existentibus, quæ ab instinctu naturali expositæ, circa analogiam rerum internam, particulariter, secondario, et ratione instinctûs naturalis versantur. p. 66.

† Circa analogiam rerum internam, sive signaturas et characteras rerum penitiores versantur. p. 68.

CHAP. III.

life.* Nothing can be admitted in religion which contradicts these primary notions; but if any one has a revelation from heaven in addition to these, which may happen to him sleeping or waking, he should keep it to himself, since nothing can be of importance to the human race, which is not established by the evidence of their common faculties. Nor can any thing be known to be revealed, which is not revealed to ourselves; all else being tradition and historic testimony, which does not amount to knowledge. The specific difference of man from other animals he makes not reason, but the capacity of religion. It is a curious coincidence, that John Wesley has said something of the same kind.† It is also remarkable that we find in another work of Lord Herbert, De Religione Gentilium, which dwells again on his five articles of natural religion, essential, as he expressly lays it down, to salvation, the same illustration of the being of a Deity from the analogy of a watch or clock, which Paley has since employed. I believe that it occurs in an intermediate writer. ‡

Remarks of Gassendi on Herbert.

27. Lord Herbert sent a copy of his treatise De Veritate several years after its publication to Gassendi. We have a letter to the noble author in

* P. 222.

† I have somewhere read a profound remark of Wesley, that, considering the sagacity which many animals display, we cannot fix upon reason as the distinction between them and man: the true difference is, that we are formed to know God, and they are not.

‡ Et quidem si horologium per diem et noctem integram horas signanter indicans, viderit quispiam non mente captus, id consilio arteque summa factum judicaverit. Ecquis non planè demens, qui hanc mundi machinam non per viginti quatuor horas tantum, sed per tot sæcula circuitus suos obeuntem animadverterit, non id omne sapientissimo utique potentissimoque alicui autori tribuat? De Relig. Gentil. cap. xiii.

CHAP. III.

the third volume of the works of that philosopher, showing, in the candid and sincere spirit natural to him, the objections that struck his mind in reading the book.* Gassendi observes that the distinctions of four kinds of truth are not new; the veritas rei of Lord Herbert being what is usually called substance, his veritas apparentiæ no more than accident, and the other two being only sense and reason. Gassendi seems not wholly to approve, but gives as the best, a definition of truth little differing from Herbert's, the agreement of the cognizant intellect with the thing known: "Intellectûs cognoscentis cum re cognita congruentia." The obscurity of the treatise De Veritate could ill suit an understanding like that of Gassendi, always tending to acquire clear conceptions; and though he writes with great civility, it is not without smartly opposing what he does not approve. The aim of Lord Herbert's work, he says, is that the intellect may pierce into the nature of things, knowing them as they are in themselves without the fallacies of appearance and sense. But for himself he confesses that such knowledge he has always found above him, and that he is in darkness when he attempts to investigate the real nature of the least thing; making many of the observations on this which we read also in Locke. And he well says that we have enough for our use in the accidents or appearances of things without knowing their substances, in reply to Herbert, who had declared that we should be miserably deficient, if while nature has given us senses to discern sounds and colours and such fleeting qualities

* Gassendi Opera, iii. 411.

of things, we had no sure road to internal, eternal and necessary truths.* The universality of those innate principles, especially moral and religious, on which his correspondent had built so much, is doubted by Gassendi on the usual grounds, that many have denied, or been ignorant of them. The letter is imperfect, some sheets of the autograph having been lost.

28. Too much space may seem to have been bestowed on a writer who cannot be ranked high among metaphysicians. But Lord Herbert was not only a distinguished name, but may claim the precedence among those philosophers in England. If his treatise De Veritate is not as an entire work very successful, or founded always upon principles which have stood the test of severe reflection, it is still a monument of an original independent thinker, without rhapsodies of imagination, without pedantic technicalities, and above all, bearing witness to a sincere love of the truth he sought to apprehend. The ambitious expectation that the real essences of things might be discovered, if it were truly his, as Gassendi seems to suppose, could not be warranted by any thing, at least, within the knowledge of that age. But from some expressions of Herbert I should infer that he did not think our faculties competent to solve the whole problem of *quiddity*, as the logicians called it, or the real nature of any thing, at

* Misere nobiscum actum esset, si ad percipiendos colores, sonos et qualitates cæteras caducas atque momentaneas subessent media, nulla autem ad veritates illas internas, æternas, necessarias sine errore superesset via.

CHAP. III.

least, objectively without us.* He is indeed so obscure, that I will not vouch for his entire consistency. It has been an additional motive to say as much as I have done concerning Lord Herbert, that I know not where any account of his treatise De Veritate will be found. Brucker is strangely silent about this writer, and Buhle has merely adverted to the letter of Gassendi. Descartes has spoken of Lord Herbert's book with much respect, though several of their leading principles were far from the same. It was translated into French in 1639, and this translation he found less difficult than the original.†

Gassendi's defence of Epicurus.

29. Gassendi himself ought, perhaps, to be counted wholly among the philosophers of this period, since many of his writings were published, and all may have been completed within it. They are contained in six large folio volumes, rather closely printed. The Exercitationes Paradoxicæ, published in 1624, are the earliest. These contain an attack on the logic of Aristotle, the fortress that so many bold spirits were eager to assail. But in more advanced life Gassendi withdrew in great

* Cum facultates nostræ ad analogiam propriam terminatæ quidditates rerum intimas non penetrent: ideo quid res naturalis in seipsa sit, tali ex analogia ad nos ut *sit* constituta, perfecte sciri non potest. p. 165. Instead of *sit*, it might be better to read *est*. In another place he says, it is doubtful whether any thing exist in nature, concerning which we have a complete knowledge. The eternal and necessary truths which Herbert contends for our knowing, seem to have been his communes notitiæ, subjectively understood, rather than such as relate to external objects.

† Descartes, vol. viii. p. 138. and 168. J'y trouve plusieurs choses fort bonnes, *sed non publici saporis;* car il y a peu de personnes qui soient capables d'entendre la métaphysique. Et, pour le général du livre, il tient un chemin fort différent de celui que j'ai suivi. . . . Enfin, par conclusion, encore que je ne puisse m'accorder en tout aux sentimens de cet auteur, je ne laisse pas de l'estimer beaucoup au-dessus des esprits ordinaires.

measure from this warfare, and his Logic, in the Syntagma Philosophicum, the record of his latest opinions, is chiefly modelled on the Aristotelian, with sufficient commendation of its author. In the study of ancient philosophy, however, Gassendi was impressed with an admiration of Epicurus. His physical theory, founded on corpuscles and a vacuum, his ethics, in their principle and precepts, his rules of logic and guidance of the intellect, seemed to the cool and independent mind of the French philosopher more worthy of regard than the opposite schemes prevailing in the schools, and not to be rejected on account of any discredit attached to the name. Combining with the Epicurean physics and ethics the religious element which had been unnecessarily discarded from the philosophy of the Garden, Gassendi displayed both in a form no longer obnoxious. The Syntagma Philosophiæ Epicuri, published in 1649, is an elaborate vindication of this system, which he had previously expounded in a commentary on the tenth book of Diogenes Laertius. He had already effaced the prejudices against Epicurus himself, whom he seems to have regarded with the affection of a disciple, in a biographical treatise on his life and moral character.

His chief works after 1650.

30. Gassendi died in 1656; the Syntagma Philosophicum, his greatest as well as last work, in which it is natural to seek the whole scheme of his philosophy, was published by his friend Sorbière in 1658. We may therefore properly defer the consideration of his metaphysical writings to the next period; but the controversy in which he was in-

CHAP. III.

volved with Descartes will render it necessary to bring his name forward again before the close of this chapter.

Sect. II.

On the Philosophy of Lord Bacon.

Preparation for the philosophy of

31. It may be judged from what has been said in a former volume, as well as in our last pages, that at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the higher philosophy, which is concerned with general truth, and the means of knowing it, had been little benefited by the labours of any modern inquirer. It was become indeed no strange thing, at least out of the air of a college, to question the authority of Aristotle; but his disciples pointed with scorn at the endeavours which had as yet been made to supplant it, and asked whether the wisdom so long reverenced was to be set aside for the fanatical reveries of Paracelsus, the unintelligible chimæras of Bruno, or the more plausible, but arbitrary, hypotheses of Telesio.

Lord Bacon.

32. Francis Bacon was born in 1561.* He came to years of manhood at the time when England was rapidly emerging from ignorance and obsolete methods of study, in an age of powerful minds, full himself of ambition, confidence and energy. If we

* Those who place Lord Bacon's birth in 1560, as Mr. Montagu has done, must be understood to follow the old style, which creates some confusion. He was born the 22d of January, and died the 9th of April, 1626, in the sixty-sixth year of his age, as we are told in his life by Rawley, the best authority we have.

think on the public history of Bacon, even during the least public portion of it, philosophy must appear to have been but his amusement; it was by his hours of leisure, by time hardly missed from the laborious study and practice of the law and from the assiduities of a courtier's life, that he became the father of modern science. This union of an active with a reflecting life had been the boast of some ancients, of Cicero and Antonine; but what comparison, in depth and originality, between their philosophy and that of Bacon?

His plan of philosophy.

33. This wonderful man, in sweeping round the champaign of universal science with his powerful genius, found as little to praise in the recent, as in the ancient methods of investigating truth. He liked as little the empirical presumption of drawing conclusions from a partial experience as the sophistical dogmatism which relied on unwarranted axioms and verbal chicane. All, he thought, was to be constructed anew; the investigation of facts, their arrangement for the purposes of inquiry, the process of eliciting from them the required truth. And for this he saw, that, above all, a thorough purgation of the mind itself would be necessary, by pointing out its familiar errors, their sources, and their remedies.

Time of its conception.

34. It is not exactly known at what age Bacon first conceived the scheme of a comprehensive philosophy, but it was, by his own account, very early in life.* Such noble ideas are most congenial

* In a letter to Father Fulgentio, which bears no date in print, but must have been written about 1624, he refers to a juvenile work about forty years before, which he had confidently entitled The Great-

CHAP. III.

to the sanguine spirit of youth, and to its ignorance of the extent of labour it undertakes. In the dedi-

est Birth of Time. Bacon says: Equidem memini me quadraginta abhinc annis juvenile opusculum circa has res confecisse, quod magna prorsus fiducia et magnifico titulo, "Temporis partum maximum" inscripsi. The apparent vain-glory of this title is somewhat extenuated by the sense he gave to the phrase Birth of Time. He meant that the lapse of time and long experience were the natural sources of a better philosophy, as he says in his dedication of the Instauratio Magna: Ipse certè, ut ingenue fateor, soleo æstimare hoc opus magis pro partu temporis quam ingenii. Illud enim in eo solummodo mirabile est, initia rei, et tantas de iis quæ invaluerunt suspiciones, alicui in mentem venire potuisse. Cætera non illibenter sequuntur.

No treatise with this precise title appears. But we find prefixed to some of the short pieces a general title, Temporis Partus Masculus, sive Instauratio Magna Imperii Universi in Humanum. These treatises, however, though earlier than his great works, cannot be referred to so juvenile a period as his letter to Fulgentio intimates, and I should rather incline to suspect that the *opusculum* to which he there refers, has not been preserved. Mr. Montagu is of a different opinion. See his Note I. to the Life of Bacon in vol. xvi. of his edition. The Latin tract De Interpretatione Naturæ Mr. M. supposes to be the germ of the Instauratio, as the Cogitata et Visa are of the Novum Organum. I do not dissent from this; but the former bears marks of having been written after Bacon had been immersed in active life. The most probable conjecture appears to be that he very early perceived the meagreness and imperfection of the academical course of philosophy, and of all others which fell in his way, and formed the scheme of affording something better from his own resources; but that he did not commit *much* to paper, nor had planned his own method till after he was turned of thirty, which his letter to the King intimates.

In a recent and very brilliant sketch of the Baconian philosophy, (Edinb. Review, July 1837) the two leading principles that distinguish it throughout all its parts, are justly denominated *utility* and *progress*. To do good to mankind, and do more and more good, are the ethics of its inductive method. We may only regret that the ingenious author of this article has been hurried sometimes into the low and contracted view of the deceitful word *utility*, which regards rather the enjoyments of physical convenience, than the general well-being of the individual and the species. If Bacon looked more frequently to the former, it was because so large a portion of his writings relates to physical observation and experiment. But it was far enough from his design to set up physics in any sort of opposition to ethics, much less in a superior light. I dissent also from some of the observations in this article, lively as they are, which tend to depreciate the originality and importance of the Baconian methods. The reader may turn to a note on this subject by Dugald Stewart, at the end of the present section.

cation of the Novum Organum to James in 1620, he says that he had been about some such work near thirty years, "so as I made no haste." "And the reason," he adds, "why I have published it now, specially being imperfect, is, to speak plainly, because I number my days, and would have it saved. There is another reason of my so doing, which is to try whether I can get help in one intended part of this work, namely, the compiling of a natural and experimental history, which must be the main foundation of a true and active philosophy." He may be presumed at least to have made a very considerable progress in his undertaking, before the close of the sixteenth century. But it was first promulgated to the world by the publication of his Treatise on the Advancement of Learning in 1605. In this, indeed, the whole of the Baconian philosophy may be said to be implicitly contained, except perhaps the second book of the Novum Organum. In 1623, he published his more celebrated Latin translation of this work, if it is not rather to be deemed a new one, entitled, De Augmentis Scientiarum. I find, upon comparison, that more than two thirds of this treatise are a version, with slight interpolation or omission, from the Advancement of Learning, the remainder being new matter.

Instauratio Magna.

35. The Instauratio Magna had been already published in 1620, while Lord Bacon was still chancellor. Fifteen years had elapsed since he gave to the world his Advancement of Learning, the first fruits of such astonishing vigour of philosophical genius, that, inconceivable as the comple-

CHAP. III.

tion of the scheme he had even then laid down in prospect for his new philosophy by any single effort must appear, we may be disappointed at the great deficiencies which this latter work exhibits, and which he was not destined to fill up. But he had passed the interval in active life, and in dangerous paths, deserting, as in truth he had all along been prone enough to do, the "shady spaces of philosophy," as Milton calls them, for the court of a sovereign, who with some real learning, was totally incapable of sounding the depths of Lord Bacon's mind, or even of estimating his genius.

First part: Partitiones Scientiarum.

36. The Instauratio Magna, dedicated to James, is divided, according to the magnificent ground-plot of its author, into six parts. The first of these he entitles Partitiones Scientiarum, comprehending a general summary of that knowledge which mankind already possess; yet not merely treating this affirmatively, but taking special notice of whatever should seem deficient or imperfect; sometimes even supplying, by illustration or precept, these vacant spaces of science. This first part he declares to be wanting in the Instauratio. It has been chiefly supplied by the treatise De Augmentis Scientiarum; yet perhaps even that does not fully come up to the amplitude of his design.

Second part: Novum Organum.

37. The second part of the Instauratio was to be, as he expresses it, "the science of a better and more perfect use of reason in the investigation of things, and of the true aids of the understanding," the new logic, or inductive method, in which what is eminently styled the Baconian philosophy consists. This, as far he completed it, is known to all

by the name of the Novum Organum. But he seems to have designed a fuller treatise in place of this; the aphorisms into which he has digested it being rather the heads or theses of chapters, at least in many places, that would have been further expanded.* And it is still more important to observe, that he did not achieve the whole of this summary that he had promised; but out of nine divisions of his method we only possess the first, which he denominates prærogativæ instantiarum. Eight others, of exceeding importance in logic, he has not touched at all, except to describe them by name and to promise more. "We will speak," he says, "in the first place, of prerogative instances; secondly, of the aids of induction; thirdly, of the rectification of induction; fourthly, of varying the investigation according to the nature of the subject; fifthly, of prerogative natures, (or objects,) as to investigation, or the choice of what shall be first inquired into; sixthly, of the boundaries of inquiry, or the synoptical view of all natures in the world; seventhly, on the application of inquiry to practice, and what relates to man; eighthly, on the preparations (parascevis) for inquiry; lastly, on the ascending and descending scale of axioms."† All these, after the first, are wanting, with the excep-

* It is entitled by himself, Partis secundæ Summa, digesta in aphorismos.

† Dicemus itaque primo loco de prærogativis instantiarum; secundo, de adminiculis inductionis; tertio, de rectificatione inductionis; quarto, de variatione inquisitionis pro natura subjecti; quinto, de prærogativis naturarum quatenus ad inquisitionem, sive de eo quod inquirendum est prius et posterius; sexto, de terminis inquisitionis, sive de synopsi omnium naturarum in universo; septimo, de deductione ad praxin, sive de eo quod est in ordine ad hominem; octavo, de parascevis ad inquisitionem; postremo autem, de scala ascensoria et descensoria axiomatum. lib. ii. 22.

CHAP. III.

tion of some slightly handled in separate parts of Bacon's writings; and the deficiency, which is so important, seems to have been sometimes overlooked by those who have written about the Novum Organum.

Third part: Natural History.

38. The third part of the Instauratio Magna was to comprize an entire natural history, diligently and scrupulously collected from experience of every kind; including under that name of natural history every thing wherein the art of man has been employed on natural substances either for practice or experiment; no method of reasoning being sufficient to guide us to truth as to natural things, if they are not themselves clearly and exactly apprehended. It is unnecessary to observe that very little of this immense chart of nature could be traced by the hand of Bacon, or in his time. His Centuries of Natural History, containing about one thousand observed facts and experiments, are a very slender contribution towards such a description of universal nature as he contemplated: these form no part of the Instauratio Magna, and had been compiled before. But he enumerates one hundred and thirty particular histories which ought to be drawn up for his great work. A few of these he has given in a sort of skeleton, as samples rather of the method of collecting facts, than of the facts themselves; namely, the History of Winds, of Life and Death, of Density and Rarity, of Sound and Hearing.

Fourth part: Scala Intellectûs.

39. The fourth part, called Scala Intellectûs, is also wanting with the exception of a very few introductory pages. "By these tables," says Bacon,

"we mean not such examples as we subjoin to the several rules of our method, but types and models, which place before our eyes the entire process of the mind in the discovery of truth, selecting various and remarkable instances."* These he compares to the diagrams of geometry, by attending to which the steps of the demonstration become perspicuous. Though the great brevity of his language in this place renders it rather difficult to see clearly what he understood by these models, some light appears to be thrown on this passage by one in the treatise De Augmentis, where he enumerates among the desiderata of logic what he calls traditio lampadis, or a delivery of any science or particular truth according to the order wherein it was discovered.† "The methods of geometers," he there says, "have some resemblance to this art;" which is not, however, the case as to the synthetical geometry with which we are ge-

* Neque de iis exemplis loquimur, quæ singulis præceptis ac regulis illustrandi gratia adjiciuntur, hoc enim in secunda operis parte abunde præstitimus, sed plane typos intelligimus ac plasmata, quæ universum mentis processum atque inveniendi continuatam fabricam et ordinem in certis subjectis, iisque variis et insignibus tanquam sub oculos ponant. Etenim nobis venit in mentem in mathematicis, astante machina, sequi demonstrationem facilem et perspicuam; contra absque hac commoditate omnia videri involuta et quam revera sunt subtiliora.

† Lib. vi. cap. 2. Scientia quæ aliis tanquam tela pertexendo traditur, eadem methodo, si fieri possit, animo alterius est insinuanda, qua primitus inventa est. Atque hoc ipsum fieri sane potest in scientia per inductionem acquisita: sed in anticipata ista et præmatura scientia, qua utimur, non facile dicat quis quo itinere ad eam quam nactus est scientiam pervenerit. Attamen sane secundum majus et minus possit quis scientiam propriam revisere, et vestigia suæ cognitionis simul et consensûs remetiri; atque hoc facto scientiam sic transplantare in animum alienum, sicut crevit in suo. . . . . Cujus quidem generis traditionis, methodus mathematicorum in eo subjecto similitudinem quandam habet. I do not well understand the words, in eo subjecto; he may possibly have referred to analytical processes.

CHAP. III.

nerally conversant. It is the history of analytical investigation, and many beautiful illustrations of it have been given since the days of Bacon in all subjects to which that method of inquiry has been applied.

Fifth part: Anticipationes Philosophiæ.

40. In a fifth part of the Instauratio Magna Bacon had designed to give a specimen of the new philosophy which he hoped to raise after a due use of his natural history and inductive method, by way of anticipation or sample of the whole. He calls it Prodromi, sive Anticipationes Philosophiæ Secundæ. And some fragments of this part are published by the names Cogitata et Visa, Cogitationes de Natura Rerum, Filum Labyrinthi, and a few more, being as much, in all probability, as he had reduced to writing. In his own metaphor, it was to be like the payment of interest, till the principal could be raised; tanquam fœnus reddatur, donec sors haberi possit. For he despaired of ever completing the work by a sixth and last portion, which was to display a perfect system of philosophy, deduced and confirmed by a legitimate, sober, and exact inquiry according to the method which he had invented and laid down. "To perfect this last part is above our powers and beyond our hopes. We may, as we trust, make no despicable beginnings, the destinies of the human race must complete it; in such a manner, perhaps, as men, looking only at the present, would not readily conceive. For upon this will depend not only a speculative good, but all the fortunes of mankind, and all their power." And with an eloquent prayer that his exertions

Sixth part: Philosophia Secunda.

may be rendered effectual to the attainment of truth and happiness, this introductory chapter of the Instauratio, which announces the distribution of its portions, concludes. Such was the temple, of which Bacon saw in vision before him the stately front and decorated pediments, in all their breadth of light and harmony of proportion, while long vistas of receding columns and glimpses of internal splendour revealed a glory that it was not permitted him to comprehend. In the treatise De Augmentis Scientiarum, and in the Novum Organum, we have less, no doubt, than Lord Bacon, under different conditions of life, might have achieved; he might have been more emphatically the high-priest of nature, if he had not been the chancellor of James I.; but no one man could have filled up the vast outline which he alone, in that stage of the world, could have so boldly sketched.

Course of studying Lord Bacon.

41. The best order of studying the Baconian philosophy would be to read attentively the Advancement of Learning; next, to take the treatise De Augmentis, comparing it all along with the former, and afterwards to proceed to the Novum Organum. A less degree of regard has usually been paid to the Centuries of Natural History, which are the least important of his writings, or even to the other philosophical fragments, some of which contain very excellent passages; yet such, in great measure, as will be found substantially in other parts of his works. The most remarkable are the Cogitata et Visa. It must be said, that one who thoroughly venerates Lord

CHAP. III.

Bacon will not disdain his repetitions, which sometimes, by variations of phrase, throw light upon each other. It is generally supposed that the Latin works were translated by several assistants, among whom Herbert and Hobbes have been named, under the author's superintendence.* The Latin style of these writings is singularly concise, energetic and impressive, but frequently crabbed, uncouth and obscure; so that we read with more admiration of the sense than delight in the manner of delivering it. But Rawley in his Life of Bacon informs us that he had seen about twelve autographs of the Novum Organum, wrought up and improved year by year, till it reached the shape in which it was published, and he does not intimate that these were in English, unless the praise he immediately afterwards bestows on his English style may be thought to warrant that supposition.† I do not know that we have evidence as to any of the Latin works being translations from English, except the treatise De Augmentis.

* The translation was made, as Archbishop Tenison informs us, "by Mr. Herbert and some others, who were esteemed masters in the Roman eloquence."

† Ipse reperi in archivis dominationis suæ, autographa plus minus duodecim Organi Novi de anno in annum elaborati, et ad incudem revocati, et singulis annis, ulteriore lima subinde politi et castigati, donec in illud tandem corpus adoleverat, quo in lucem editum fuit; sicut multa ex animalibus fœtus lambere consuescunt usque quo ad membrorum firmitudinem eos perducant. In libris suis componendis verborum vigorem et perspicuitatem præcipuè sectabatur, non elegantiam aut concinnitatem sermonis, et inter scribendum aut dictandum sæpe interrogavit, num sensus ejus clare admodum et perspicuè redditus esset? Quippe qui sciret æquum esse ut verba famularentur rebus, non res verbis. Et si in stylum forsitan politiorem incidisset, siquidem apud nostrates eloquii Anglicani artifex habitus est, id evenit, quia evitare arduum ei erat.

42. The leading principles of the Baconian philosophy are contained in the Advancement of Learning. These are amplified, corrected, illustrated and developed in the treatise De Augmentis Scientiarum, from the fifth book of which, with some help from other parts, is taken the first book of the Novum Organum, and even a part of the second. I use this phrase, because, though earlier in publication, I conceive that the Novum Organum was later in composition. All that very important part of this fifth book which relates to Experientia Litterata, or Venatio Panis, as he calls it, and contains excellent rules for conducting experiments in natural philosophy, is new, and does not appear in the Advancement of Learning, except by way of promise of what should be done in it. Nor is this, at least so fully and clearly, to be found in the Novum Organum. The second book of this latter treatise he professes not to anticipate. De Novo Organo silemus, he says, neque de eo quicquam prælibamus. This can only apply to the second book, which he considered as the real exposition of his method, after clearing away the fallacies which form the chief subject of the first. Yet what is said of Topica particularis, in this fifth book De Augmentis, (illustrated by "articles of inquiry concerning gravity and levity,") goes entirely on the principles of the second book of the Novum Organum.

Nature of the Baconian induction.

43. Let us now see what Lord Bacon's method really was. He has given it the name of induction,

CHAP. III.

but carefully distinguishes it from what bore that name in the old logic, that is, an inference from a perfect enumeration of particulars to a general law of the whole. For such an enumeration, though of course conclusive, is rarely practicable in nature, where the particulars exceed our powers of numbering.*

* Inductio quæ procedit per enumerationem simplicem, res puerilis est, et precario concludit, et periculo exponitur ab instantia contradictoria, et plerumque secundum pauciora quam par est, et ex his tantummodo quæ præsto sunt, pronuntiat. At inductio quæ ad inventionem et demonstrationem scientiarum et artium erit utilis, naturam separare debet, per rejectiones et exclusiones debitas; ac deinde post negativas tot quot sufficiunt, super affirmativas concludere; quod adhuc factum non est, nec tentatum certe, nisi tantummodo a Platone, qui ad excutiendas definitiones et ideas, hac certe forma inductionis aliquatenus utitur. Nov. Org. i. 105. In this passage Bacon seems to imply that the enumeration of particulars in any induction is or may be imperfect. This is certainly the case in the plurality of physical inductions; but it does not appear that the logical writers looked upon this as the primary and legitimate sense. Induction was distinguished into the complete and incomplete. "The word," says a very modern writer, "is perhaps unhappy, as indeed it is taken in several vague senses; but to abolish it is impossible. It is the Latin translation of επαγωγη, which word is used by Aristotle as a counterpart to συλλογισμος. He seems to consider it in a perfect, or dialectic, and in an imperfect or rhetorical sense. Thus if a genus (G.) contained four species (A. B. C. D.), syllogism would argue, that what is true of G. is true of any one of the four; but perfect induction would reason, that what we can prove true of A. B. C. D. separately, we may properly state as true of G., the whole genus. This is evidently a formal argument, as demonstrative as syllogism. But the imperfect or rhetorical induction will perhaps enumerate three only of the species, and then draw the conclusion concerning G., which virtually includes the fourth, or what is the same thing, will argue, that what is true of the three is to be believed true likewise of the fourth." Newman's Lectures on Logic, p. 73. (1837.) The same distinction between perfect and imperfect induction is made in the Encyclopédie Françoise, art. Induction, and apparently on the authority of the ancients.

It may be observed, that this imperfect induction may be put in a regular logical form, and is only vicious in syllogistic reasoning when the conclusion asserts a higher probability than the premises. If, for example, we reason thus: Some serpents are venomous. — This unknown animal is a serpent — Therefore this is venomous; we are guilty of an obvious paralogism. If we infer only, This may be venomous, our reasoning is perfectly valid in itself, at least in the common apprehension of all mankind, except

CHAP. III.

Nor again is the Baconian method to be confounded with the less complete form of the inductive process, namely, inferences from partial experience in similar circumstances; though this may be a very sufficient ground for practical, which is, probable knowledge. His own method rests on the same general principle, namely, the uniformity of the laws of nature, so that in certain conditions of phænomena the same effects or the same causes may be assumed; but it endeavours to establish these laws on a more exact and finer process of reasoning than partial experience can effect. For the recurrence of antecedents and consequents does not prove a necessary connexion between them, unless we can exclude the

dialecticians, but not regular in form. The only means that I perceive of making it so, is to put it in some such phrase as the following: All unknown serpents are affected by a certain probability of being venomous: This animal, &c. It is not necessary, of course, that the probability should be capable of being estimated, provided we mentally conceive it to be no other in the conclusion than in the major term. In the best treatises on the strict or syllogistic method, as far as I have seen, there seems a deficiency in respect to *probable* conclusions, which may have arisen from the practice of taking instances from universal or necessary, rather than contingent truths, as well as from the contracted views of reasoning which the Aristotelian school have always inculcated. No sophisms are so frequent in practice as the concluding generally from a partial induction, or assuming (most commonly tacitly) by what Archbishop Whateley calls "a kind of logical fiction," that a few individuals are "adequate samples or representations of the class they belong to." These sophisms cannot, in the present state of things, be practised largely in physical science or natural history; but in reasonings on matter of fact they are of incessant occurrence. The "logical fiction" may indeed frequently be employed, even on subjects unconnected with the physical laws of nature; but to know when this may be, and to what extent, is just that which, far more than any other skill, distinguishes what is called a good reasoner from a bad one. This note will not, by an attentive reader, be thought inapposite to the text, or to some passages that will follow in the present chapter.

CHAP. III.

presence of all other conditions which may determine the event. Long and continued experience of such a recurrence, indeed, raises a high probability of a necessary connexion; but the aim of Bacon was to supersede experience in this sense, and to find a shorter road to the result; and for this his methods of exclusion are devised. As complete and accurate a collection of facts, connected with the subject of inquiry, as possible is to be made out by means of that copious natural history which he contemplated, or from any other good sources. These are to be selected, compared, and scrutinized, according to the rules of natural interpretation delivered in the second book of the Novum Organum, or such others as he designed to add to them; and if experiments are admissible, these are to be conducted according to the same rules. Experience and observation are the guides through the Baconian philosophy, which is the hand-maid and interpreter of nature. When Lord Bacon seems to decry experience, which in certain passages he might be thought to do, it is the particular and empirical observation of individuals, from which many rash generalizations had been drawn, as opposed to that founded on an accurate natural history. Such hasty inferences he reckoned still more pernicious to true knowledge than the sophistical methods of the current philosophy; and in a remarkable passage, after censuring this precipitancy of empirical conclusions in the chemists, and in Gilbert's Treatise on the Magnet, utters a prediction that if ever mankind, excited by his counsels, should seriously

betake themselves to seek the guidance of experience instead of relying on the dogmatic schools of the sophists, the proneness of the human mind to snatch at general axioms would expose them to much risk of error from the theories of this superficial class of philosophers.*

His dislike of Aristotle.

44. The indignation, however, of Lord Bacon is more frequently directed against the predominant philosophy of his age, that of Aristotle and the schoolmen. Though he does justice to the great abilities of the former, and acknowledges the exact attention to facts displayed in his History of Animals, he deems him one of the most eminent adversaries to the only method that can guide us to the real laws of nature. The old Greek philosophers, Empedocles, Leucippus, Anaxagoras, and others of their age, who had been in the right track of investigation, stood much higher in his esteem than their successors, Plato, Zeno, Aristotle, by whose lustre they had been so much superseded, that both their works have perished, and their tenets are with difficulty collected. These more distinguished leaders of the Grecian schools were in his eyes little else than disputatious professors (it must be remembered that Bacon had in general only physical science in his view) who seemed to have it in common with children, "ut ad garriendum prompti sint, generare non possint;" so wordy and barren was their mis-called wisdom.

* Nov. Organ. lib. i. 64. It may be doubted whether Bacon did full justice to Gilbert.

CHAP. III.

His method much required.

45. Those who object to the importance of Lord Bacon's precepts in philosophy that mankind have practised many of them immemorially, are rather confirming their utility than taking off much from their originality in any fair sense of that term. Every logical method is built on the common faculties of human nature, which have been exercised since the creation in discerning, better or worse, truth from falsehood, and inferring the unknown from the known. That men might have done this more correctly, is manifest from the quantity of error into which, from want of reasoning well on what came before them, they have habitually fallen. In experimental philosophy, to which the more special rules of Lord Bacon are generally referred, there was a notorious want of that very process of reasoning which he has supplied. It is probable, indeed, that the great physical philosophers of the seventeenth century would have been led to employ some of his rules, had he never promulgated them; but I believe they had been little regarded in the earlier period of science.* It is also a very defective view of the Baconian method to look only at the experimental rules given in the Novum Organum. The preparatory steps of completely exhausting the natural history of the subject of inquiry by a patient and sagacious consideration of it in every light, are at least of equal importance, and equally prominent in the inductive philosophy.

* It has been remarked, that the famous experiment of Pascal on the barometer by carrying it to a considerable elevation, was "a *crucial instance*, one of the first, if not the very first on record in physics." Herschel, p. 229.

46. The first object of Lord Bacon's philosophical writings is to prove their own necessity, by giving an unfavourable impression as to the actual state of most sciences, in consequence of the prejudices of the human mind, and of the mistaken methods pursued in their cultivation. The second was to point out a better prospect for the future. One of these occupies the treatise De Augmentis, and the first book of the Novum Organum. The other, besides many anticipations in these, is partially detailed in the second book, and would have been more thoroughly developed in those remaining portions which the author did not complete. We shall now give a very short sketch of these two famous works, which comprize the greater part of the Baconian philosophy.

CHAP. III.

Its objects.

47. The Advancement of Learning is divided into two books only; the treatise De Augmentis into nine. The first of these, in the latter, is introductory, and designed to remove prejudices against the search for truth, by indicating the causes which had hitherto obstructed it. In the second book, he lays down his celebrated partition of human learning into history, poetry and philosophy, according to the faculties of the mind respectively concerned in them, the memory, imagination and reason. History is natural or civil, under the latter of which ecclesiastical and literary histories are comprized. These again fall into regular subdivisions; all of which he treats in a summary manner, and points out the deficiencies which ought to be supplied in many departments of history. Poetry succeeds in the last chapter of the

Sketch of the treatise De Augmentis.

History.

Poetry.

CHAP. III.

same book, but by confining that name to fictitious narrative, except as to the ornaments of style, which he refers to a different part of his subject, he much limited his views of that literature; even if it were true, as it certainly is not, that the imagination alone, in any ordinary use of the word, is the medium of poetical emotion. The word emotion indeed is sufficient to show that Bacon should either have excluded poetry altogether from his enumeration of sciences and learning, or taken into consideration other faculties of the soul than those which are merely intellectual.

Fine passage on poetry.

48. Stewart has praised with justice a short but beautiful paragraph concerning poetry (under which title may be comprehended all the various creations of the faculty of imagination) wherein Bacon "has exhausted every thing that philosophy and good sense have yet had to offer on the subject of what has since been called the *beau idéal*." The same eminent writer and ardent admirer of Bacon observes that D'Alembert improved on the Baconian arrangement by classing the fine arts with poetry. Injustice had been done to painting and music, especially the former, when, in the fourth book De Augmentis, they were counted as mere "artes voluptariæ," subordinate to a sort of Epicurean gratification of the senses, and only somewhat more liberal than cookery or cosmetics.

Natural Theology and Metaphysics.

49. In the third book, science having been divided into theological and philosophical, and the former, or what regards revealed religion, being postponed for the present, he lays it down that all philosophy relates to God, to nature, or to man.

Under natural theology, as a sort of appendix, he reckons the doctrine of angels and superhuman spirits; a more favourite theme, especially as treated independently of revelation, in the ages that preceded Lord Bacon, than it has been since. Natural philosophy is speculative or practical; the former divided into physics, in a particular sense, and metaphysics; "one of which enquireth and handleth the material and efficient causes; the other handleth the formal and final causes." Hence physics dealing with particular instances, and regarding only the effects produced, is precarious in its conclusions, and does not reach the stable principles of causation.

> Limus ut hic durescit, et hæc ut cera liquescit
> Uno eodemque igni.

Metaphysics, to which word he gave a sense as remote from that which it bore in the Aristotelian schools, as from that in which it is commonly employed at present, had for its proper object the investigation of forms. It was "a generally received and inveterate opinion, that the inquisition of man is not competent to find out essential forms or true differences." Formæ inventio, he says in another place, habetur pro desperata. The word *form* itself, being borrowed from the old philosophy, is not immediately intelligible to every reader. "In the Baconian sense," says Playfair, "form differs only from cause in being permanent, whereas we apply cause to that which exists in order of time." Form (*natura naturans*, as it was barbarously called) is the general law, or condition of existence, in any

Form of bodies

CHAP. III.

substance or quality (*natura naturata*), which is wherever its form is.* The conditions of a mathematical figure, prescribed in its definition, might in this sense be called its form, if it did not seem to be Lord Bacon's intention to confine the word to the laws of particular sensible existences. In modern philosophy, it might be defined to be that particular combination of forces, which impresses a certain modification upon matter subjected to their influence.

might sometimes be inquired into.

50. To a knowledge of such forms, or laws of essence and existence, at least in a certain degree, it might be possible, in Bacon's sanguine estimation of his own logic, for man to attain. Not that we could hope to understand the forms of complex beings, which are almost infinite in variety, but the simple and primary natures, which are combined in them. "To inquire the form of a lion, of an oak, of gold, nay of water, of air, is a vain pursuit; but to inquire the forms of sense, of voluntary motion, of vegetation, of colours, of gravity and levity, of density and tenuity, of heat, of cold, and all other natures and qualities, which, like an alphabet, are not many, and of which the essences, upheld by matter, of all creatures do consist; to inquire, I say, the true forms of these is that part of metaphysic which we now define of." † Thus, in the

* Licet enim in natura nihil vere existat præter corpora individua, edentia actus puros individuos ex lege, in doctrinis tamen illa ipsa lex, ejusque inquisitio, et inventio atque explicatio pro fundamento est tam ad sciendum quam operandum. Eam autem legem ejusque paragraphos, Formarum nomine intelligimus; præsertim cum hoc vocabulum invaluerit et familiariter occurrat. Nov. Org. ii. 2.

† In the Novum Organum he seems to have gone a little beyond this, and to have hoped that the form itself of concrete things might

words he soon afterwards uses, "of natural philosophy, the basis is natural history; the stage next the basis, is physic; the stage next the vertical point is metaphysic. As for the vertical point, 'Opus quod operatur Deus a principio usque ad finem,' the summary law of nature, we know not whether man's inquiry can attain unto it."*

CHAP. III.

Final causes too much slighted.

51. The second object of metaphysics, according to Lord Bacon's notion of the word, was the investigation of final causes. It is well known that he has spoken of this with unguarded disparagement.† "Like a virgin consecrated to God, it bears nothing;" one of those witty conceits that sparkle over his writings, but will not bear a severe examination. It has been well remarked that almost at the moment he published this, one of the most important discoveries of his age, the circulation of the blood, had rewarded the acuteness of Harvey in reasoning on the final cause of the valves in the veins.

Man not included by him in physics.

52. Nature, or physical philosophy, according to Lord Bacon's partition, did not comprehend the human species. Whether this be not more con-

be known. Datæ autem naturæ formam, sive differentiam veram, sive naturam naturantem, sive fontem emanationis, (ista enim vocabula habemus, quæ ad indicationem rei proxime accedunt,) invenire opus et intentio est Humanæ Scientiæ. Lib. ii. 1.

* Advancement of Learning, book ii. This sentence he has scarcely altered in the Latin.

† Causa finalis tantum abest ut prosit, ut etiam scientias corrumpat, nisi in hominis actionibus. Nov. Org. ii. 2. It must be remembered that Bacon had good reason to deprecate the admixture of theological dogmas with philosophy, which had been, and has often since been, the absolute perversion of all legitimate reasoning in science. See what Stewart has said upon Lord Bacon's objection to reasoning from final causes in *physics*. Philosophy of the Active and Moral Powers, book iii. chap. 2. sect. 4.

CHAP. III.

sonant to popular language, adopted by preceding systems of philosophy, than to a strict and perspicuous arrangement, may by some be doubted; though a very respectable authority, that of Dugald Stewart, is opposed to including man in the province of physics. For it is surely strange to separate the physiology of the human body, as quite a science of another class, from that of inferior animals; and if we place this part of our being under the department of physical philosophy, we shall soon be embarrassed by what Bacon has called the "doctrina de fœdere," the science of the connexion between the soul of man and his bodily frame, a vast and interesting field, even yet very imperfectly explored.

Man, in body and mind.

53. It has pleased, however, the author to follow his own arrangement. The fourth book relates to the constitution, bodily and mental, of mankind. In this book he has introduced several subdivisions which, considered merely as such, do not always appear the most philosophical; but the pregnancy and acuteness of his observations under each head silences all criticism of this kind. This book has nearly double the extent of the corresponding pages in the Advancement of Learning. The doctrine as to the substance of the thinking principle having been very slightly touched, or rather passed over, with two curious disquisitions on divination and fascination, he advances in four ensuing books to the intellectual and moral faculties, and those sciences which immediately depend upon them. Logic and Ethics are the grand divisions, correlative to the reason and the will of man.

Logic;

CHAP. III.

Logic, according to Lord Bacon, comprizes the sciences of inventing, judging, retaining, and delivering the conceptions of the mind. We invent, that is, discover new arts, or new arguments; we judge by induction or by syllogism; the memory is capable of being aided by artificial methods. All these processes of the mind are the subjects of several sciences, which it was the peculiar aim of Bacon, by his own logic, to place on solid foundations.

extent given it by Bacon.

54. It is here to be remarked, that the sciences of logic and ethics, according to the partitions of Lord Bacon, are far more extensive than we are accustomed to consider them. Whatever concerned the human intellect came under the first; whatever related to the will and affections of the mind fell under the head of ethics. Logica de intellectu et ratione, ethica de voluntate appetitu et affectibus disserit; altera decreta, altera actiones progignit. But it has been usual to confine logic to the methods of guiding the understanding in the search for truth; and some, though, as it seems to me, in a manner not warranted by the best usage of philosophers *, have endeavoured to exclude every thing but the syllogistic mode of reasoning from the logical province. Whether again the nature and operations of the human mind, in general, ought to be reckoned a part of physics, has already been mentioned as a disputable question.

* In altera philosophiæ parte, quæ est *quærendi* ac disserendi, quæ λογικη dicitur. Cic. de Fin. i. 14.

CHAP. III.

Grammar and Rhetoric.

55. The science of delivering our own thoughts to others, branching into grammar and rhetoric, and including poetry, so far as its proper vehicles, metre and diction, are concerned, occupies the sixth book. In all this he finds more desiderata than from the great attention paid to these subjects by the ancients could have been expected. Thus his ingenious collection of antitheta, or common-places in rhetoric, though mentioned by Cicero as to the judicial species of eloquence, is first extended by Bacon himself to deliberative or political orations. I do not however think it probable that this branch of topics could have been neglected by antiquity, though the writings relating to it may not have descended to us; nor can we by any means say there is nothing of the kind in Aristotle's Rhetoric. Whether the utility of these common-places, when collected in books, be very great, is another question. And a similar doubt might be suggested with respect to the clenchs, or refutations, of rhetorical sophisms, "colores boni et mali," which he reports as equally deficient, though a commencement had been made by Aristotle.

Ethics.

56. In the seventh book we come to ethical science. This he deems to have been insufficiently treated. He would have the different tempers and characters of mankind first considered, then their passions and affections (neither of which, as he justly observes, find a place in the Ethics of Aristotle, though they are sometimes treated, not so appositely, in his Rhetoric), lastly, the methods of altering and affecting the will and appetite, such

as custom, education, imitation, or society. "The main and primitive division of moral knowledge seemeth to be into the exemplar or platform of good, and the regiment or culture of the mind; the one describing the nature of good, the other presenting rules how to subdue, apply and accommodate the will of man thereunto." This latter he also calls "the Georgics of the mind." He seems to place "the platform or essence of good" in seeking the good of the whole, rather than that of the individual, applying this to refute the ancient theories as to the summum bonum. But perhaps Bacon had not thoroughly disentangled this question, and confounds, as is not unusual, the *summum bonum*, or personal felicity, with the object of moral action, or *commune bonum*. He is right, however, in preferring, morally speaking, the active to the contemplative life against Aristotle and other philosophers. This part is translated in De Augmentis, with little variation, from the Advancement of Learning; as is also what follows on the Georgics, or culture, of the mind. The philosophy of civil life, as it relates both to the conduct of men in their mutual intercourse, which is properly termed prudence, and to that higher prudence, which is concerned with the administration of communities, fills up the chart of the Baconian ethics. In the eighth book, admirable reflections on the former of these subjects occur at almost every sentence. Many, perhaps most of these will be found in the Advancement of Learning. But in this, he had been, for a reason sufficiently obvious and almost avowed, cautiously

CHAP. III.

Politics.

silent upon the art of government, the craft of his king. The motives for silence were still so powerful, that he treats only in the De Augmentis, of two heads in political science; the methods of enlarging the boundaries of a state, which James I. could hardly resent as an interference with his own monopoly, and one of far more importance to the well-being of mankind, the principles of universal jurisprudence, or rather of universal legislation, according to which standard all laws ought to be framed. These he has sketched in ninety-seven aphorisms, or short rules, which, from the great experience of Bacon in the laws, as well as his peculiar vocation towards that part of philosophy, deserve to be studied at this day. Upon such topics, the progressive and innovating spirit of his genius was less likely to be perceived; but he is, perhaps, equally free from what he has happily called in one of his essays, the "froward retention of custom," the prejudice of mankind, like that of perverse children, against what is advised to them for their real good, and what they cannot deny to be conducive to it. This whole eighth book is pregnant with profound and original thinking.

Theology.

The ninth and last, which is short, glances only at some desiderata in theological science, and is chiefly remarkable as it displays a more liberal and catholic spirit than was often to be met with in a period signalized by bigotry and ecclesiastical pride. But as the abjuration of human authority is the first principle of Lord Bacon's philosophy, and the preparation for his

logic, it was not expedient to say too much of its usefulness in theological pursuits.

CHAP. III.

Desiderata enumerated by him.

57. At the conclusion of the whole, we may find a summary catalogue of the deficiencies which, in the course of this ample review, Lord Bacon had found worthy of being supplied by patient and philosophical inquiry. Of these desiderata, few, I fear, have since been filled up, at least in a collective and systematic manner, according to his suggestions. Great materials, useful intimations, and even partial delineations, are certainly to be found, as to many of the rest, in the writings of those who have done honour to the last two centuries. But with all our pride in modern science, very much even of what, in Bacon's time, was perceived to be wanting, remains for the diligence and sagacity of those who are yet to come.

Novum Organum: first book.

58. The first book of the Novum Organum, if it is not better known than any other part of Bacon's philosophical writings, has at least furnished more of those striking passages which shine in quotation. It is written in detached aphorisms; the sentences, even where these aphorisms are longest, not flowing much into one another, so as to create a suspicion, that he had formed adversaria, to which he committed his thoughts as they arose. It is full of repetitions; and indeed this is so usual with Lord Bacon, that whenever we find an acute reflection or brilliant analogy, it is more than an even chance that it will recur in some other place. I have already observed that he has hinted the Novum Organum to be a digested summary of his method, but not the entire system as he designed to develop

CHAP. III.

it, even in that small portion which he has handled at all.

Fallacies. Idola;

59. Of the splendid passages in the Novum Organum none are perhaps so remarkable as his celebrated division of fallacies, not such as the dialecticians had been accustomed to refute, depending upon equivocal words, or faulty disposition of premises, but lying far deeper in the natural or incidental prejudices of the mind itself. These are four in number: *idola tribûs*, to which from certain common weaknesses of human nature we are universally liable; *idola specûs*, which from peculiar dispositions and circumstances of individuals mislead them in different manners; *idola fori*, arising from the current usage of words, which represent things much otherwise than as they really are; and *idola theatri*, which false systems of philosophy and erroneous methods of reasoning have introduced. Hence, as the refracted ray gives us a false notion as to the place of the object whose image it transmits, so our own minds are a refracting medium to the objects of their own contemplation, and require all the aid of a well-directed philosophy either to rectify the perception, or to make allowances for its errors.

confounded with idols.

60. These idola, εἰδωλα, images, illusions, fallacies, or, as Lord Bacon calls them in the Advancement of Learning, false appearances, have been often named in English *idols* of the tribe, of the den, of the market-place. But it seems better, unless we retain the Latin name, to employ one of the synonymous terms given above. For the use of idol in this sense is unwarranted by the practice

of the language, nor is it found in Bacon himself; but it has misled a host of writers, whoever might be the first that applied it, even among such as are conversant with the Novum Organum. "Bacon proceeds," says Playfair, "to enumerate the causes of error, the *idols*, as he calls them, or false divinities to which the mind had so long been accustomed to bow." And with a similar misapprehension of the meaning of the word, in speaking of the *idola specûs*, he says: "Besides the causes of error which are common to all mankind, each individual, according to Bacon, has his own dark cavern or den, into which the light is imperfectly admitted, and in the obscurity of which a tutelary idol lurks, at whose shrine the truth is often sacrificed."* Thus also Dr. Thomas Brown; "in the inmost sanctuaries of the mind were all the idols which he overthrew;" and a later author on the Novum Organum fancies that Bacon "strikingly, though in his usual quaint style, calls the prejudices that check the progress of the mind by the name of idols, because mankind are apt to pay homage to these, instead of regarding truth."† Thus too in the translation of the Novum Organum, published in Mr. Basil Montagu's edition, we find *idola* rendered by idols, without explanation. We may in fact say that this meaning has been almost univer-

* Preliminary Dissertation to Encyclopaedia.

† Introduction to the Novum Organum, published by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. Even Stewart seems to have fallen into the same error. "While these idols of the den maintain their authority, the cultivation of the philosophical spirit is impossible; or rather it is in a renunciation of this idolatry that the philosophical spirit essentially consists." Dissertation, &c.—The observation is equally true, whatever sense we may give to *idol*.

CHAP. III.

sally given by later writers. By whom it was introduced I am not able to say. Cudworth, in a passage where he glances at Bacon, has said, "it is no *idol of the den*, to use that affected language." But, in the pedantic style of the seventeenth century, it is not impossible that idol may here have been put as a mere translation of the Greek ειδωλον, and in the same general sense of an idea or intellectual image.* Although the popular sense would not be inapposite to the general purpose of Bacon in this first part of the Novum Organum, it cannot be reckoned so exact and philosophical an illustration of the sources of human error as the unfaithful image, the shadow of reality, seen through a refracting surface, or reflected from an unequal mirror, as in the Platonic hypothesis of the cave, wherein we are placed with our backs to the light, to which he seems to allude in his *idola specûs*.† And as this is also plainly the true meaning, as a comparison with the parallel passages in the Advancement of Learning demonstrates, there can be no pretence for continuing to employ

* In Todd's edition of Johnson's Dictionary this sense is not mentioned. But in that of the Encyclopædia Metropolitana we have these words: "An *idol* or image is also opposed to a reality; thus Lord Bacon (see the quotation from him) speaks of idols or false appearances." The quotation is from the translation of one of his short tracts, which is not made by himself. It is however a proof that the word *idol* was once at least used in this sense.

† Quisque ex phantasiæ suæ cellulis, tanquam ex specu Platonis, philosophatur; Historia Naturalis, in præfatione. Coleridge has some fine lines in allusion to this hypothesis in that magnificent effusion of his genius, the introduction to the second book of Joan of Arc, but withdrawn, after the first edition, from that poem; where he describes us as 'Placed with our backs to bright reality.' I am not however certain that Bacon meant this. See De Augmentis, lib. v. c. 4.

a word which has served to mislead such men as Brown and Playfair.

CHAP. III.

Second book of Novum Organum.

61. In the second book of the Novum Organum, we come at length to the new logic, the interpretation of nature, as he calls it, or the rules for conducting inquiries in natural philosophy according to his inductive method. It is, as we have said, a fragment of his entire system, and is chiefly confined to the "prerogative instances*," or phænomena which are to be selected, for various reasons, as most likely to aid our investigations of nature. Fifteen of these are used to guide the intellect, five to assist the senses, seven to correct the practice. This second book is written with more than usual want of perspicuity, and though it is intrinsically the Baconian philosophy in a pre-eminent sense, I much doubt whether it is very extensively read, though far more so than it was fifty years since. Playfair however has given an excellent abstract of it in his Preliminary Dissertation to the Encyclopædia Britannica, with abundant and judicious illustrations from modern science. Sir John Herschel, in his admirable Discourse on Natural Philosophy, has added a greater number from still more recent discoveries, and has also furnished such a luminous development of the difficulties of the Novum Organum, as had been vainly hoped in former times.

* The allusion in "prærogativæ instantiarum" is not to the English word prerogative, as Sir John Herschel seems to suppose (Discourse on Natural Philosophy, p. 182.), but to the prærogativa centuria in the Roman comitia, which being first called, though by lot, was generally found, by some prejudice or superstition, to influence the rest, which seldom voted otherwise. It is rather a forced analogy, which is not uncommon with Bacon.

CHAP. III.

The commentator of Bacon should be himself of an original genius in philosophy. These novel illustrations are the more useful, because Bacon himself, from defective knowledge of natural phænomena, and from what, though contrary to his precepts, his ardent fancy could not avoid, a premature hastening to explain the essences of things instead of their proximate causes, has frequently given erroneous examples. It is to be observed on the other hand, that he often anticipates with marvellous sagacity the discoveries of posterity, and that his patient and acute analysis of the phænomena of heat has been deemed a model of his own inductive reasoning. "No one," observes Playfair, "has done so much in such circumstances." He was even ignorant of some things that he might have known; he wanted every branch of mathematics; and placed in this remote corner of Europe, without many kindred minds to animate his zeal for physical science, seems hardly to have believed the discoveries of Galileo.

Confidence of Bacon.

62. It has happened to Lord Bacon, as it has to many other writers, that he has been extolled for qualities by no means characteristic of his mind. The first aphorism of the Novum Organum, so frequently quoted, "Man, the servant and interpreter of nature, performs and understands so much as he has collected concerning the order of nature by observation or reason, nor do his power or his knowledge extend farther," has seemed to bespeak an extreme sobriety of imagination, a willingness to acquiesce in registering the phænomena of nature without seeking a revelation of her secrets.

And nothing is more true than that such was the cautious and patient course of inquiry prescribed by him to all the genuine disciples of his inductive method. But he was far from being one of those humble philosophers who would limit human science to the enumeration of particular facts. He had, on the contrary, vast hopes of the human intellect under the guidance of his new logic. The Latens Schematismus, or intrinsic configuration of bodies, the Latens processus ad formam, or transitional operation through which they pass from one form, or condition of nature, to another, would one day, as he hoped, be brought to light; and this not, of course, by simple observation of the senses, nor even by assistance of instruments, concerning the utility of which he was rather sceptical, but by a rigorous application of exclusive and affirmative propositions to the actual phænomena by the inductive method. "It appears," says Playfair, "that Bacon placed the ultimate object of philosophy too high, and too much out of the reach of man, even when his exertions are most skilfully conducted. He seems to have thought, that by giving a proper direction to our researches, and carrying them on according to the inductive method, we should arrive at the knowledge of the essences of the powers and qualities residing in bodies; that we should, for instance, become acquainted with the essence of heat, of cold, of colour, of transparency. The fact however is that, in as far as science has yet advanced, no one essence has been discovered, either as to matter in general, or as to any of its more extensive modifications. We are yet in doubt

CHAP. III.

whether heat is a peculiar motion of the minute parts of bodies, as Bacon himself conceived it to be, or something emitted or radiated from their surfaces, or, lastly, the vibrations of an elastic medium by which they are penetrated and surrounded."

Almost justified of late;

63. It requires a very extensive survey of the actual dominion of science, and a great sagacity to judge, even in the loosest manner, what is beyond the possible limits of human knowledge. Certainly, since the time when this passage was written by Playfair, more steps have been made towards realizing the sanguine anticipations of Bacon than in the two centuries that had elapsed since the publication of the Novum Organum. We do not yet *know* the real nature of heat, but few would pronounce it impossible or even unlikely that we may know it, in the same sense that we know other physical realities not immediately perceptible, before many years shall have expired. The atomic theory of Dalton, the laws of crystalline substances discovered by Häuy, the development of others still subtler by Mitscherlich, instead of exhibiting, as the older philosophy had done, the idola rerum, the sensible appearances of concrete substance, radiations from the internal glory, admit us, as it were, to stand within the vestibule of nature's temple, and to gaze on the very curtain of the shrine. If indeed we could know the internal structure of one primary atom, and could tell, not of course by immediate testimony of sense, but by legitimate inference from it, through what constant laws its component molecules, the atoms of atoms, attract, retain, and repel each other, we should have before

our mental vision not only the Latens Schematismus, the real configuration of substances, but their *form*, or efficient nature, and could give as perfect a definition of any one of them, of gold for example, as we can of a cone or a parallelogram. The recent discoveries of animal and vegetable development, and especially the happy application of the microscope to observing chemical and organic changes in their actual course, are equally remarkable advances towards a knowledge of the Latens processus ad formam, the corpuscular motions by which all change must be accomplished, and are in fact a great deal more than Bacon himself would have deemed possible.*

but should be kept within bounds.

64. These astonishing revelations of natural mysteries, fresh tidings of which crowd in upon us every day, may be likely to overwhelm all sober hesitation as to the capacities of the human mind, and to bring back that confidence which Bacon, in so much less favourable circumstances, has ventured to feel. There seem however, to be good reasons for keeping within bounds this expectation of future improvement, which, as it has sometimes been announced in unqualified phrases, is hardly more philosophical than the vulgar supposition that the capacities of mankind are almost stationary. The phænomena of nature indeed, in all their possible combinations, are so infinite, in a popular

* By the Latens processus, he meant only what is the natural operation by which one form or condition of being is induced upon another. Thus, when the surface of iron becomes rusty, or when water is converted into steam, some change has taken place, a *latent progress* from one form to another. This, in numberless cases, we can now answer, at least to a very great extent, by the science of chemistry.

CHAP. III.

sense of the word, that during no period, to which the human species can be conceived to reach, would they be entirely collected and registered. The case is still stronger as to the secret agencies and processes by means of which their phænomena are displayed. These have as yet, in no one instance, so far as I know, been fully ascertained. "Microscopes," says Herschel, "have been constructed which magnify more than one thousand times in linear dimension, so that the smallest visible grain of sand may be enlarged to the appearance of one million times more bulky; yet the only impression we receive by viewing it through such a magnifier is that it reminds us of some vast fragment of a rock; while the intimate structure on which depend its colour, its hardness, and its chemical properties, remains still concealed; we do not seem to have made even an approach to a closer analysis of it by any such scrutiny."*

Limits to our knowledge by sense.

65. The instance here chosen is not the most favourable for the experimental philosopher. He might perhaps hope to gain more knowledge by applying the best microscope to a regular crystal or to an organised substance. And it is impossible not to regret that the great discovery of the solar microscope has been either so imperfectly turned to account by philosophers, or has disappointed their hopes of exhibiting the mechanism of nature with the distinctness they require. But there is evidently a fundamental limitation of physical science, arising from those of the bodily senses and of mus-

* Discourse on Nat. Philos. p. 191.

cular motions. The nicest instruments must be constructed and directed by the human hand; the range of the finest glasses must have a limit not only in their own natural structure but in that of the human eye. But no theory in science will be acknowledged to deserve any regard, except as it is drawn immediately, and by an exclusive process, from the phænomena which our senses report to us. Thus the regular observation of definite proportions in chemical combination has suggested the atomic theory; and even this has been sceptically accepted by our cautious school of philosophy. If we are ever to go farther into the molecular analysis of substances, it must be through the means and upon the authority of new discoveries exhibited to our senses in experiment. But the existing powers of exhibiting or compelling nature by instruments, vast as they appear to us, and wonderful as has been their efficacy in many respects, have done little for many years past in diminishing the number of substances reputed to be simple; and with strong reasons to suspect that some of these, at least, yield to the crucible of nature, our electric batteries have up to this hour played innocuously round their heads.

66. Bacon has thrown out, once or twice, a hint at a single principle, a summary law of nature, as if all subordinate causes resolved themselves into one great process, according to which God works his will in the universe: Opus quod operatur Deus a principio usque ad finem. The natural tendency towards simplification, and what we consider as harmony, in our philosophical systems, which Lord Bacon

CHAP. III.

himself reckons among the *idola tribûs*, the fallacies incident to the species, has led some to favour this unity of physical law. Impact and gravity have each had their supporters. But we are as yet at a great distance from establishing such a generalization, nor does it appear by any means probable that it will ever assume any simple form.

Inductive logic; whether confined to physics.

67. The close connexion of the inductive process recommended by Bacon with natural philosophy in the common sense of that word, and the general selection of his examples for illustration from that science, have given rise to a question, whether he comprehended metaphysical and moral philosophy within the scope of his inquiry.* That they formed a part of the Instauration of Sciences, and therefore of the Baconian philosophy in the fullest sense of the word, is obvious from the fact that a large proportion of the treatise De Augmentis Scientiarum is dedicated to those subjects; and it is not less so that the *idola* of the Novum Organum are at least as apt to deceive us in moral as in physical argument. The question, therefore, can only be raised as to the peculiar method of conducting investigations, which is considered as his own. This would, however, appear to have been decided by himself in very positive language. "It may be doubted, rather than objected, by some, whether we look to the perfection, by means of our method, of natural philosophy alone, or of the other sciences also, of logic, of ethics, of politics.

* This question was discussed some years since by the late editor of the Edinburgh Review on one side, and by Dugald Stewart on the other. See Edinburgh Review, vol. iii. p. 273. and the Preliminary Dissertation to Stewart's Philosophical Essays.

But we certainly mean what has here been said, to be understood as to them all; and as the ordinary logic, which proceeds by syllogism, does not relate to physical only, but to every other science; so ours, which proceeds by induction, comprizes them all. For we as much collect a history and form tables concerning anger, fear, shame and the like, and also concerning examples from civil life, and as much concerning the intellectual operations of memory, combination and partition, judgment and the others, as concerning heat and cold, or light, or vegetation, or such things."* But he proceeds to intimate, as far as I understand the next sentence, that, although his method or logic, strictly speaking, is applicable to other subjects, it is his immediate object to inquire into the properties of natural things, or what is generally meant by physics. To this indeed the second book of the Novum Organum, and the portions that he completed of the remaining parts of the Instauratio Magna bear witness.

* Etiam dubitabit quispiam potius quam objiciet, utrum nos de naturali tantum philosophia, an etiam de scientiis reliquis, logicis, ethicis, politicis, secundum viam nostram perficiendis loquamur. At nos certè de universis hæc, quæ dicta sunt, intelligimus; atque quemadmodum vulgaris logica, quæ regit res per syllogismum, non tantum ad naturales, sed ad omnes scientias pertinet, ita et nostra, quæ procedit per inductionem, omnia complectitur. Tam enim Historiam et Tabulas Inveniendi conficimus de ira, metu et verecundia et similibus, ac etiam de exemplis rerum civilium; nec minùs de motibus mentalibus memoriæ, compositionis et divisionis, judicii et reliquorum, quam de calido et frigido, aut luce, aut vegetatione aut similibus. Sed tamen cum nostra ratio interpretandi, post historiam præparatam et ordinatam, non mentis tantum motus et discursus, ut logica vulgaris, sed et rerum naturam intueatur, ita mentem regimus ut ad rerum naturam se aptis per omnia modis applicare possit. Atque propterea multa et diversa in doctrina interpretationis præcipimus, quæ ad subjecti, de quo inquirimus, qualitatem et conditionem modum inveniendi nonnulla ex parte applicent. Nov. Org. i. 127.

CHAP. III.

Baconian philosophy built on observation and experiment.

68. It by no means follows, because the leading principles of the inductive philosophy are applicable to other topics of inquiry than what is usually comprehended under the name of physics, that we can employ all the prærogativæ instantiarum, and still less the peculiar rules for conducting experiments which Bacon has given us, in moral, or even psychological disquisitions. Many of them are plainly referrible to particular manipulations, or at most to limited subjects of chemical theory. And the frequent occurrence of passages which show Lord Bacon's fondness for experimental processes, seem to have led some to consider his peculiar methods as more exclusively related to such modes of inquiry than they really are. But when the Baconian philosophy is said to be experimental, we are to remember that experiment is only better than what we may call passive obsèrvation, because it enlarges our capacity of observing with exactness and expedition. The reasoning is grounded on observation in both cases. In astronomy, where nature remarkably presents the objects of our observation without liability to error or uncertain delay, we may reason on the inductive principle as well as in sciences that require tentative operations. The inference drawn from the difference of time in the occultation of the satellites of Jupiter at different seasons, in favour of the Copernican theory and against the instantaneous motion of light, is an induction of the same kind with any that could be derived from an *experimentum crucis*. It is an exclusion of those hypotheses

which might solve many phænomena, but fail to explain those immediately observed.

CHAP. III.

69. But astronomy, from the comparative solitariness, if we may so say, of all its phænomena, and the simplicity of their laws, has an advantage that is rarely found in sciences of mere observation. Bacon justly gave to experiment, or the interrogation of nature, compelling her to give up her secrets, a decided preference whenever it can be employed; and it is unquestionably true that the inductive method is tedious, if not uncertain, when it cannot resort to so compendious a process. One of the subjects selected by Bacon in the third part of the Instauration as specimens of the method by which an inquiry into nature should be conducted, the History of Winds, does not greatly admit of experiments; and the very slow progress of meteorology, which has yet hardly deserved the name of a science, when compared with that of chemistry or optics, will illustrate the difficulties of employing the inductive method without their aid. It is not, therefore, that Lord Bacon's method of philosophizing is properly experimental, but that by experiment it is most successfully displayed.

Advantages of the latter.

70. It will follow from hence that in proportion as, in any matter of inquiry, we can separate, in what we examine, the determining conditions, or law of form, from every thing extraneous, we shall be more able to use the Baconian method with advantage. In metaphysics, or what Stewart would have called the philosophy of the human mind, there seems much in its own nature capable of

sometimes icable hiloso- of nan id.

CHAP. III.

being subjected to the inductive reasoning. Such are those facts which by their intimate connexion with physiology, or the laws of the bodily frame, fall properly within the province of the physician. In these, though exact observation is chiefly required, it is often practicable to shorten its process by experiment. And another important illustration may be given from the education of children, considered as a science of rules deduced from observation; wherein also we are frequently more able to substitute experiment for mere experience, than with mankind in general, whom we may observe at a distance, but cannot control. In politics, as well as in moral prudence, we can seldom do more than this. It seems however practicable to apply the close attention enforced by Bacon, and the careful arrangement and comparison of phænomena, which are the basis of his induction, to these subjects. Thus, if the circumstances of all popular seditions recorded in history were to be carefully collected with great regard to the probability of evidence, and to any peculiarity that may have affected the results, it might be easy to perceive such a connexion of antecedent and subsequent events in the great plurality of instances, as would reasonably lead us to form probable inferences as to similar tumults when they should occur. This has sometimes been done, with less universality, and with much less accuracy than the Baconian method requires, by such theoretical writers on politics as Machiavel and Bodin. But it has been apt to degenerate into pedantry, and to disappoint the practical statesman, who commonly rejects it with scorn; partly be-

Less so to politics and morals.

CHAP. III.

cause civil history is itself defective, seldom giving a just view of events, and still less frequently of the motives of those concerned in them; partly because the history of mankind is far less copious than that of nature, and in much that relates to politics, has not yet had time to furnish the groundwork of a sufficient induction; but partly also from some distinctive circumstances, which affect our reasonings in moral far more than in physical science, and which deserve to be considered, so far at least as to sketch the arguments that might be employed.

Induction less conclusive in these subjects.

71. The Baconian logic, as has been already said, deduces universal principles from select observation, that is, from particular, and, in some cases of experiment, from singular instances. It may easily appear to one conversant with the syllogistic method less legitimate than the old induction which proceeded by an exhaustive enumeration of particulars, and at most warranting but a probable conclusion. The answer to this objection can only be found in the acknowledged uniformity of the laws of nature, so that whatever has once occurred will, under absolutely similar circumstances, always occur again. This may be called the suppressed premise of every Baconian enthymem, every inference from observation of phænomena, which extends beyond the particular case. When it is once ascertained that water is composed of one proportion of oxygen to one of hydrogen, we never doubt but that such are its invariable constituents. We may repeat the experiment to secure ourselves against the risk of error in the operation or of some unperceived condition that may

CHAP. III.

have affected the result; but when a sufficient number of trials has secured us against this, an invariable law of nature is inferred from the particular instance; nobody conceives that one pint of pure water *can* be of a different composition from another. All men, even the most rude, reason upon this primary maxim; but they reason inconclusively from misapprehending the true relations of cause and effect in the phænomena to which they direct their attention. It is by the sagacity and ingenuity with which Bacon has excluded the various sources of error, and disengaged the true cause, that his method is distinguished from that which the vulgar practise.

Reasons for this difference.

72. It is required however for the validity of this method, first that there should be a strict uniformity in the general laws of nature, from which we can infer that what has been will, in the same conditions, be again; and secondly that we shall be able to perceive and estimate all the conditions with an entire and exclusive knowledge. The first is granted in all physical phænomena; but in those which we cannot submit to experiment, or investigate by some such method as Bacon has pointed out, we often find our philosophy at fault for want of the second. Such is at present the case with respect to many parts of chemistry; for example, that of organic substances, which we can analyse, but as yet can in very few instances recompose. We do not know, and, if we did know, could not perhaps command, the entire conditions of organic bodies (even structurally, not as living), the *form*, as Bacon calls

it, of blood, or milk, or oak-galls. But in attempting to subject the actions of men to this inductive philosophy, we are arrested by the want of both the necessary requisitions. Matter can only be diverted from its obedience to unvarying laws by the control of mind; but we have to inquire whether mind is equally the passive instrument of any law. We have to open the great problem of human liberty, and must deny even a disturbing force to the will before we can assume that all actions of mankind must, under given conditions, preserve the same necessary train of sequences as a molecule of matter. But if this be answered affirmatively, we are still almost as far removed from a conclusive result as before. We cannot without contradicting every day experience, maintain that all men are determined alike by the same exterior circumstances; we must have recourse to the differences of temperament, of physical constitution, of casual or habitual association. The former alone, however, are, at the best, subject to our observation, either at the time, or, as is most common, through testimony; of the latter, no being, which does not watch the movements of the soul itself, can reach more than a probable conjecture. Sylla resigned the dictatorship, therefore all men, in the circumstances of Sylla, will do the same, is an argument false in one sense of the word circumstances, and useless at least in any other. It is doubted by many, whether meteorology will ever be well understood, on account of the complexity of the forces concerned, and their remoteness from the apprehension of the senses. Do not the same

CHAP. III.

difficulties apply to human affairs? And while we reflect on these difficulties, to which we must add those which spring from the scantiness of our means of observation, the defectiveness and falsehood of testimony, especially what is called historical, and a thousand other errors to which the various "idola of the world and the cave" expose us, we shall rather be astonished that so many probable rules of civil prudence have been treasured up and confirmed by experience than disposed to give them a higher place in philosophy than they can claim.

Considerations on the other side.

73. It might be alleged in reply to these considerations, that admitting the absence of a strictly scientific certainty in moral reasoning, we have yet, as seems acknowledged on the other side, a great body of probable inferences, in the extensive knowledge and sagacious application of which most of human wisdom consists. And all that is required of us in dealing either with moral evidence or with the conclusions we draw from it, is to estimate the probability of neither too high; an error from which the severe and patient discipline of the inductive philosophy is most likely to secure us. It would be added by some, that the theory of probabilities deduces a wonderful degree of certainty from things very uncertain, when a sufficient number of experiments can be made; and thus, that events depending upon the will of mankind, even under circumstances the most anomalous and apparently irreducible to principles, may be calculated with a precision inexplicable to any one who has paid little attention to the subject. This, perhaps,

may appear rather a curious application of mathematical science, than one from which our moral reasonings are likely to derive much benefit, especially as the conditions under which a very high probability can mathematically be obtained, involve a greater number of trials than experience will generally furnish. It is nevertheless a field that deserves to be more fully explored: the success of those who have attempted to apply analytical processes to moral probabilities has not hitherto been very encouraging, inasmuch as they have often come to results falsified by experience; but a more scrupulous regard to all the conditions of each problem may perhaps obviate many sources of error.*

Result of the whole.

74. It seems upon the whole that we should neither conceive the inductive method to be useless in regard to any subject but physical science, nor deny the peculiar advantages it possesses in those inquiries rather than others. What must in all studies be important, is the habit of turning

* A calculation was published not long since, said to be on the authority of an eminent living philosopher, according to which, granting a moderate probability that each of twelve jurors would decide rightly, the chances in favour of the rectitude of their unanimous verdict were made something extravagantly high, I think about 8000 to 1. It is more easy to perceive the fallacies of this pretended demonstration, than to explain how a man of great acuteness should have overlooked them. One among many is that it assumes the giving a verdict at all to be voluntary, whereas, in practice, the jury must decide one way or the other. We must deduct therefore a fraction expressing the probability that some of the twelve have wrongly conceded their opinions to the rest. One danger of this rather favourite application of mathematical principles to moral probabilities, as indeed it is of statistical tables, (a remark of far wider extent,) is that, by considering mankind merely as units, it practically habituates the mind to a moral and social levelling, as inconsistent with a just estimate of men as it is characteristic of the present age.

CHAP. III.

round the subject of our investigation in every light, the observation of every thing that is peculiar, the exclusion of all that we find on reflection to be extraneous. In historical and antiquarian researches, in all critical examination which turns upon facts, in the scrutiny of judicial evidence, a great part of Lord Bacon's method, not, of course, all the experimental rules of the Novum Organum, has, as I conceive, a legitimate application.* I

* The *principle* of Bacon's prerogative instances, and perhaps in some cases a very analogous application of them, appear to hold in our inquiries into historical evidence. The fact sought to be ascertained in the one subject corresponds to the physical law in the other. The testimonies, as we, though rather laxly, call them, or passages in books from which we infer the fact, correspond to the observations or experiments from which we deduce the law. The necessity of a sufficient induction by searching for all proof that may bear on the question, is as manifest in one case as in the other. The exclusion of precarious and inconclusive evidence is alike indispensable in both. The selection of prerogative instances, or such as carry with them satisfactory conviction, requires the same sort of inventive and reasoning powers. It is easy to illustrate this by xamples. Thus, in the controversy concerning the Icon Basilike, the admission of Gauden's claim by Lord Clarendon is in the nature of a *prerogative instance;* it renders the supposition of the falsehood of that claim highly improbable. But the many second-hand and hearsay testimonies which may be alleged on the other side, to prove that the book was written by King Charles, are not prerogative instances, because their falsehood will be found to involve very little improbability. So, in a different controversy, the silence of some of the fathers as to the text, commonly called, of the three heavenly witnesses, even while expounding the context of the passage, is a *quasi-prerogative instance;* a decisive proof that they did not know it, or did not believe it genuine; because if they did, no motive can be conceived for the omission. But the silence of Laurentius Valla as to its absence from the manuscripts on which he commented, is no prerogative instance to prove that it was contained in them; because it is easy to perceive that he might have motives for saying nothing; and, though the negative argument, as it is called, or inference that a fact is not true, because such and such persons have not mentioned it, is, taken generally, weaker than positive testimony, it will frequently supply prerogative instances where the latter does not. Launoy, in a little treatise, De Auctoritate Negantis Argumenti, which displays more plain sense than ingenuity or philosophy, lays it down that a fact of a public nature, which is not mentioned by any writer within 200 years of the time, supposing, of course, that there is extant a competent number of writers who would naturally have mentioned

would refer any one who may doubt this to his History of Winds, as one sample of what we mean by the Baconian method, and ask whether a kind of investigation, analogous to what is therein pursued for the sake of eliciting physical truths, might not be employed in any analytical process where general or even particular facts are sought to be known. Or if an example is required of such an investigation, let us look at the copious induction from the past and actual history of mankind upon which Malthus established his general theory of the causes which have retarded the natural progress of population. Upon all these subjects before mentioned, there has been an astonishing improvement in the reasoning of the learned, and perhaps of the world at large since the time of Bacon, though much remains very defective. In what de-

it, is not to be believed. The period seems rather arbitrary, and was possibly so considered by himself; but the general principle is of the highest importance in historical criticism. Thus, in the once celebrated question of Pope Joan, the silence of all writers near the time as to so wonderful a fact, was justly deemed a kind of *prerogative* argument, when set in opposition to the many repetitions of the story in later ages. But the silence of Gildas and Bede as to the victories of Arthur is no such argument against their reality, because they were not under an historical obligation, or any strong motive, which would prevent their silence. Generally speaking, the more anomalous and interesting an event is, the stronger is the argument against its truth from the silence of contemporaries, on account of the propensity of mankind to believe and recount the marvellous; and the weaker is the argument from the testimony of later times for the same reason. A similar analogy holds also in jurisprudence. The principle of our law, rejecting hearsay and secondary evidence, is founded on the Baconian rule. Fifty persons may depose that they have heard of a fact or of its circumstances; but the eye-witness is the prerogative instance. It would carry us too far to develop this at length, even if I were fully prepared to do so; but this much may lead us to think, that whoever shall fill up that lamentable *desideratum*, the logic of evidence, ought to have familiarised himself with the Novum Organum.

CHAP. III.

gree it may be owing to the prevalence of a physical philosophy founded upon his inductive logic, it might not be uninteresting to inquire.*

Bacon's aptitude fo moral subjects.

75. It is probable that Lord Bacon never much followed up in his own mind that application of his method to psychological, and still less to moral and political subjects, which he has declared himself to intend. The distribution of the Instauratio Magna, which he has prefixed to it, relates wholly to physical science. He has in no one instance given an example, in the Novum Organum, from moral philosophy, and one only, that of artificial memory, from what he would have called logic.† But we must constantly remember that the philosophy of Bacon was left exceedingly incomplete. Many lives would not have sufficed for what he had planned, and he gave only the *horæ subsecivæ*

* "The effects which Bacon's writings have hitherto produced, have indeed been far more conspicuous in physics than in the science of mind. Even here, however, they have been great and most important, as well as in some collateral branches of knowledge, such as natural jurisprudence, political economy, criticism and morals, which spring up from the same root, or rather which are branches of that tree of which the science of mind is the trunk." Stewart's Philosophical Essays, Prelim. Dissertation. The principal advantage, perhaps, of those habits of reasoning which the Baconian methods, whether learned directly, or through the many disciples of that school, have a tendency to generate, is that they render men cautious and pains-taking in the pursuit of truth, and therefore restrain them from deciding too soon. Nemo reperitur qui in rebus ipsis et experientia moram fecerit legitimam. These words are more frequently true of moral and political reasoners than of any others. Men apply historical or personal experience, but they apply it hastily, and without giving themselves time for either a copious or an exact induction; the great majority being too much influenced by passion, party-spirit, or vanity, or perhaps by affections morally right, but not the less dangerous in reasoning, to maintain the patient and dispassionate suspense of judgment (ἀκαταληψία), which ought to be the condition of our enquiries.

† Nov. Organ. ii. 26. It may however be observed, that we find a few passages in the ethical part of De Augmentis, lib. vii. cap. 3., which show that he had some notions of moral induction germinating in his mind.

of his own. It is evident that he had turned his thoughts to physical philosophy rather for an exercise of his reasoning faculties, and out of his insatiable thirst for knowledge, than from any peculiar aptitude for their subjects, much less any advantage of opportunity for their cultivation. He was more eminently the philosopher of human, than of general nature. Hence he is exact as well as profound in all his reflections on civil life and mankind, while his conjectures in natural philosophy, though often very acute, are apt to wander far from the truth in consequence of his defective acquaintance with the phænomena of nature. His Centuries of Natural History give abundant proof of this. He is, in all these inquiries, like one doubtfully, and by degrees, making out a distant prospect, but often deceived by the haze. But if we compare what may be found in the sixth, seventh, and eighth books De Augmentis, in the Essays, the History of Henry VII. and the various short treatises contained in his works, on moral and political wisdom, and on human nature, from experience of which all such wisdom is drawn, with the Rhetoric, Ethics, and Politics of Aristotle, or with the historians most celebrated for their deep insight into civil society and human character, with Thucydides, Tacitus, Philip de Comines, Machiavel, Davila, Hume, we shall, I think, find that one man may almost be compared with all of these together. When Galileo is named as equal to Bacon, it is to be remembered that Galileo was no moral or political philosopher, and in this department Leibnitz certainly falls very short of Bacon.

Burke, perhaps, comes, of all modern writers, the nearest to him; but though Bacon may not be more profound than Burke, he is still more copious and comprehensive.

Comparison of Bacon and Galileo.

76. The comparison of Bacon and Galileo is naturally built upon the influence which, in the same age, they exerted in overthrowing the philosophy of the schools, and in founding that new discipline of real science which has rendered the last centuries glorious. Hume has given the preference to the latter, who made accessions to the domain of human knowledge so splendid, so inaccessible to cavil, so unequivocal in their results, that the majority of mankind would perhaps be carried along with this decision. There seems however to be no doubt that the mind of Bacon was more comprehensive and profound. But these comparisons are apt to involve *incommensurable* relations. In their own intellectual characters, they bore no great resemblance to each other. Bacon had scarce any knowledge of geometry, and so far ranks much below not only Galileo, but Descartes, Newton, and Leibnitz, all signalised by wonderful discoveries in the science of quantity, or in that part of physics which employs it. He has, in one of the profound aphorisms of the Novum Organum, distinguished the two species of philosophical genius, one more apt to perceive the differences of things, the other their analogies. In a mind of the highest order neither of these powers will be really deficient, and his own inductive method is at once the best exercise of both, and the best safeguard against the excess

of either. But, upon the whole, it may certainly be said, that the genius of Lord Bacon was naturally more inclined to collect the resemblances of nature than to note her differences. This is the case with men like him of sanguine temper, warm fancy, and brilliant wit; but it is not the frame of mind which is best suited to strict reasoning.

77. It is no proof of a solid acquaintance with Lord Bacon's philosophy, to deify his name as the ancient schools did those of their founders, or even to exaggerate the powers of his genius. Powers they were surprisingly great, yet limited in their range, and not in all respects equal; nor could they overcome every impediment of circumstance. Even of Bacon it may be said, that he attempted more than he has achieved, and perhaps more than he clearly apprehended. His objects appear sometimes indistinct, and I am not sure that they are always consistent. In the Advancement of Learning, he aspired to fill up, or at least to indicate, the deficiencies in every department of knowledge, he gradually confined himself to philosophy, and at length to physics. But few of his works can be deemed complete, not even the treatise De Augmentis, which comes nearer to it than most of the rest. Hence the study of Lord Bacon is difficult, and not, as I conceive, very well adapted to those who have made no progress whatever in the exact sciences, nor accustomed themselves to independent thinking. They have never been made a text-book in our universities; though, after a judicious course of preparatory

CHAP. III.

studies, by which I mean a good foundation in geometry and the philosophical principles of grammar, the first book of the Novum Organum might be very advantageously combined with the instruction of an enlightened lecturer.*

* It by no means is to be inferred, that because the actual text of Bacon is not always such as can be well understood by very young men, I object to their being led to the real principles of inductive philosophy, which alone will teach them to think, firmly but not presumptuously, for themselves. Few defects, on the contrary, in our system of education are more visible than the want of an adequate course of logic; and this is not likely to be rectified so long as the Aristotelian methods challenge that denomination exclusively of all other aids to the reasoning faculties. The position that nothing else is to be called logic, were it even agreeable to the derivation of the word, which it is not, or to the usage of the ancients, which is by no means uniformly the case, or to that of modern philosophy and correct language, which is certainly not at all the case, is no answer to the question, whether what *we* call logic does not deserve to be taught at all.

A living writer of high reputation, who has at least fully understood his own subject, and illustrated it better than his predecessors from a more enlarged reading and thinking, wherein his own acuteness has been improved by the writers of the Baconian school, has been unfortunately instrumental, by the very merits of his treatise on Logic, in keeping up the prejudices on this subject, which have generally been deemed characteristic of the university to which he belonged. All the reflection I have been able to give to the subject has convinced me of the inefficacy of the syllogistic art in enabling us to think rightly for ourselves, or, which is part of thinking rightly, in detecting those fallacies of others which might impose on our understanding before we have acquired that art. It has been often alleged, and, as far as I can judge, with perfect truth, that no man, who can be worth answering, ever commits, except through mere inadvertence, any paralogisms which the common logic serves to point out. It is easy enough to construct syllogisms which sin against its rules; but the question is, by whom they were employed. It is not uncommon, as I am aware, to represent an adversary as reasoning illogically; but this is generally effected by putting his argument into our own words. The great fault of all, over-induction, or the assertion of a general premise upon an insufficient examination of particulars, cannot be discovered or cured by any *logical* skill; and this is the error into which men really fall, not that of omitting to *distribute the middle term*, though it comes in effect, and often in appearance, to the same thing. I do not contend that the rules of syllogism, which are very short and simple, ought not to be learned; or that there may not be some advantage in occasionally stating our own argument, or calling on another to state his, in a regular form (an advantage, however, rather dialectical, which

CHAP. III.

78. The ignorance of Bacon in mathematics, and, what was much worse, his inadequate notions of their utility, must be reckoned among the chief

His prejudice against mathematics.

is, in other words, rhetorical, than one which affects the reasoning faculties themselves); nor do I deny that it is philosophically worth while to know that all *general reasoning by words* may be reduced into syllogism, as it is to know that most of geometry may be resolved into the super-position of equal triangles; but to represent this portion of logical science as the whole, appears to me almost like teaching the scholar Euclid's axioms, and the axiomatic theorem to which I have alluded, and calling this the science of geometry. The following passage from the Port-Royal logic is very judicious and candid, giving as much to the Aristotelian system as it deserves: "Cette partie, que nous avons maintenant à traiter, qui comprend les règles du raisonnement, est estimée la plus importante de la logique, et c'est presque l'unique qu'on y traite avec quelque soin; mais il y a sujet de douter si elle est aussi utile qu'on se l'imagine. La plupart des erreurs des hommes, comme nous avons déjà dit ailleurs, viennent bien plus de ce qu'ils raisonnent sur de faux principes, que non pas de ce qu'ils raisonnent mal suivant leurs principes. Il arrive rarement qu'on se laisse tromper par des raisonnemens qui ne soient faux que parceque la conséquence en est mal tirée; et ceux qui ne seroient pas capables d'en reconnoître la fausseté par la seule lumière de la raison, ne le seroient pas ordinairement d'entendre les règles que l'on en donne, et encore moins de les appliquer. Neanmoins, quand on ne considéreroit ces règles que comme des vérités spéculatives, elles serviroient toujours à exercer l'esprit; et de plus, on ne peut nier qu'elles n'aient quelque usage en quelques rencontres, et à l'égard de quelques personnes, qui, étant d'un naturel vif et pénétrant, ne se laissent quelquefois tromper par des fausses conséquences, que faute d'attention, à quoi la réflexion qu'ils feroient sur ces règles, seroit capable de remédier." Art de Penser, part iii. How different is this sensible passage from one quoted from some anonymous writer in Whateley's Logic, p. 34. "A fallacy consists of an ingenious mixture of truth and falsehood so entangled, so intimately blended, that the fallacy is, in the chemical phrase, held in solution; *one drop of sound logic* is that test which immediately disunites them, makes the foreign substance visible, and precipitates it to the bottom." One fallacy, it might be answered, as common as any, is the *false analogy*, the misleading the mind by a comparison, where there is no real proportion or resemblance. The chemist's test is the *necessary* means of detecting the foreign substance; if the "drop of sound logic" be such, it is strange that lawyers, mathematicians, and mankind in general, should so sparingly employ it; the fact being notorious, that those most eminent for strong reasoning powers are rarely conversant with the syllogistic method. It is also well known, that these "intimately blended mixtures of truth and falsehood" deceive no man of plain sense. So much for the *test*.

CHAP. III.

defects in his philosophical writings. In a remarkable passage of the Advancement of Learning, he held mathematics to be a part of metaphysics; but the place of this is altered in the Latin, and they are treated as merely auxiliary or instrumental to physical inquiry. He had some prejudice against pure mathematics, and thought they had been unduly elevated in comparison with the realities of nature. "I know not," he says, "how it has arisen that mathematics and logic, which ought to be the serving-maids of physical philosophy, yet affecting to vaunt the certainty that belongs to them, presume to exercise a dominion over her." It is surely very erroneous to speak of geometry, which relates to the objective realities of space, and to natural objects so far as extended, as a mere handmaid of physical philosophy, and not rather a part of it. Playfair has made some good remarks on the advantages derived to experimental philosophy itself from the mere application of geometry and algebra. And one of the reflections which this ought to excite is, that we are not to conceive, as some hastily do, that there can be no real utility to mankind, even of that kind of utility which consists in multiplying the conveniences and luxuries of life, springing from theoretical and speculative inquiry. The history of algebra, so barren in the days of Tartaglia and Vieta, so productive of *wealth*, when applied to dynamical calculations in our own, may be a sufficient answer.

Bacon's excess of wit.

79. One of the petty blemishes which, though lost in the splendour of Lord Bacon's excellencies, it is not unfair to mention, is connected with the

peculiar characteristics of his mind; he is sometimes too metaphorical and witty. His remarkable talent for discovering analogies seems to have inspired him with too much regard to them as arguments, even when they must appear to any common reader fanciful and far-fetched. His terminology, chiefly for the same reason, is often a little affected, and, in Latin, rather barbarous. The divisions of his prerogative instances in the Novum Organum are not always founded upon intelligible distinctions. And the general obscurity of the style, neither himself nor his assistants being good masters of the Latin language, which at the best is never flexible or copious enough for our philosophy, renders the perusal of both his great works too laborious for the impatient reader. Brucker has well observed that the Novum Organum has been neglected by the generality, and proved of far less service than it would otherwise have been in philosophy, in consequence of these very defects, as well as the real depth of the author's mind.*

Fame of Bacon on the Continent.

80. What has been the fame of Bacon "the wisest, greatest, of mankind," it is needless to say. What has been his real influence over mankind, how much of our enlarged and exact knowledge may be attributed to his inductive method, what of this again has been due to a thorough study of his writings, and what to an indirect and secondary

* Legenda ipsa nobilissima tractatio ab illis est, qui in rerum naturalium inquisitione feliciter progredi cupiunt. Quæ si paulo plus luminis et perspicuitatis haberet, et novorum terminorum et partitionum artificio lectorem non remoraretur, longè plura, quam factum est, contulisset ad philosophiæ emendationem. His enim obstantibus a plerisque hoc organum neglectum est. Hist. Philos. v. 99.

CHAP. III.

acquaintance with them, are questions of another kind, and less easily solved. Stewart, the philosopher who has dwelt most on the praises of Bacon, while he conceives him to have exercised a considerable influence over the English men of science in the seventeenth century, supposes on the authority of Montucla, that he did not "command the general admiration of Europe," till the publication of the preliminary discourse to the French Encyclopædia by Diderot and D'Alembert. This, however, is by much too precipitate a conclusion. He became almost immediately known on the continent. Gassendi was one of his most ardent admirers. Descartes mentions him, I believe, once only, in a letter to Mersenne in 1632*; but he was of all men the most unwilling to praise a contemporary. It may be said that these were philosophers, and that their testimony does not imply the admiration of mankind. But writers of a very different character mention him in a familiar manner. Richelieu is said to have highly esteemed Lord Bacon.† And it may in some measure be due to this, that in the Sentimens de l'Académie Française sur le Cid, he is alluded to, simply by the name Bacon, as one well known.‡ Voiture,

* Vol. vi. p. 210. edit. Cousin.

† The only authority that I can now quote for this is not very good, that of Aubrey's Manuscripts, which I find in Seward's Anecdotes, iv. 328. But it seems not improbable. The same book quotes Balzac as saying: "Croyons donc, pour l'amour du Chancelier Bacon, que toutes les folies des anciens sont sages; et tous leurs songes mystères, et de celles-là qui sont estimées pures fables, il n'y en a pas une, quelque bizarre et extravagante qu'elle soit, qui n'ait son fondement dans l'histoire, *si l'on en veut croire Bacon*, et qui n'ait été déguisée de la sorte par les sages du vieux temps, pour la rendre plus utile aux peuples.

‡ p. 44. (1633.)

in a letter to Costar, about the same time, bestows high eulogy on some passages of Bacon which his correspondent had sent to him, and observes that Horace would have been astonished to hear a barbarian Briton discourse in such a style. The treatise De Augmentis was republished in France in 1624, the year after its appearance in England. It was translated into French as early as 1632; no great proofs of neglect. Editions came out in Holland, 1645, 1652, and 1662.* Even the Novum Organum, which, as has been said, never became so popular as his other writings, was thrice printed in Holland, in 1645, 1650, and 1660.† Leibnitz and Puffendorf are loud in their expressions of admiration, the former ascribing to him the revival of true philosophy as fully as we can at present.‡ I should be more inclined to doubt whether he were adequately valued by his countrymen in his own time, or in the immediately subsequent period. Under the first Stuarts, there was little taste among studious men but for theology, and chiefly for a theology which, proceeding with an extreme deference to authority, could not but generate a dispo-

* J'ai trouvé parfaitement beau tout ce que vous me mandez de Bacon. Mais ne vous semble t'il pas qu'Horace qui disoit, Visam Britannos hospitibus feros, seroit bien étonné d'entendre un barbare discourir comme cela? Costar is said by Bayle to have borrowed much from Bacon. La Mothe le Vayer mentions him in his Dialogues; in fact, instances are numerous.

† Montagu's Life of Bacon, p. 407. He has not mentioned an edition at Strasburg, 1635, which is in the British Museum.

There is also an edition without time or place, in the catalogue of the British Museum.

‡ Brucker, v. 95. Stewart says that "Bayle does not give above twelve lines to Bacon;" but he calls him one of the greatest men of his age, and the length of an article in Bayle was never designed to be a measure of the merit of its subject.

CHAP.

sition of mind, even upon other subjects, alien to the progressive and inquisitive spirit of the inductive philosophy.* The institution of the Royal Society, or rather the love of physical science out of which that institution arose, in the second part of the seventeenth century, made England resound with the name of her illustrious chancellor. Few now spoke of him without a kind of homage that only the greatest men receive. Yet still it was by natural philosophers alone that the writings of Bacon were much studied. The editions of his works,

* It is not uncommon to meet with persons, especially who are or have been engaged in teaching others dogmatically what they have themselves received in the like manner, to whom the inductive philosophy appears a mere school of scepticism, or at best wholly inapplicable to any subjects which require entire conviction. A certain deduction from certain premises is the only reasoning they acknowledge. This is peculiarly the case with theologians, but it is also extended to every thing which is taught in a synthetic manner. Lord Bacon has a remarkable passage on this in the 9th book De Augmentis. Postquam articuli et principia religionis jam in sedibus suis fuerint locata, ita ut a rationis examine penitus eximantur, tum demum conceditur ab illis illationes derivare ac deducere, secundum analogiam ipsorum. In rebus quidem naturalibus hoc non tenet. Nam et ipsa principia examini subjiciuntur; per inductionem, inquam, licet minime per syllogismum. Atque eadem illa nullam habent cum ratione repugnantiam, ut ab eodem fonte cum primæ propositiones, tum mediæ, deducantur. Aliter fit in religione: ubi et primæ propositiones authopystatæ sunt, atque per se subsistentes; et rursus non reguntur ab illa ratione quæ propositiones consequentes deducit. Neque tamen hoc fit in religione sola, sed etiam in aliis scientiis, tam gravioribus, quam levioribus, ubi scilicet propositiones humanæ placita sunt, non posita; siquidem et in illis rationis usus absolutus esse non potest. Videmus enim in ludis, puta schaccorum, aut similibus, priores ludi normas et leges merè positivas esse, et ad placitum; quas recipi, non in disputationem vocari, prorsus oporteat; ut vero vincas, et peritè lusum instituas, id artificiorum est et rationale. Eodem modo fit et in legibus humanis; in quibus haud paucæ sunt maximæ, ut loquuntur, hoc est, placita mera juris, quæ auctoritate magis quam ratione nituntur, neque in disceptationem veniunt. Quid vero sit justissimum, non absolutè, sed relativè, hoc est ex analogiâ illarum maximarum, id demum rationale est, et latum disputationi campum præbet. This passage, well weighed, may show us where, why, and by whom the synthetic and syllogistic methods have been preferred to the inductive and analytical.

except the Essays, were few; the Novum Organum never came separately from the English press.* They were not even much quoted; for I believe it will be found that the fashion of referring to the brilliant passages of the De Augmentis and the Novum Organum, at least in books designed for the general reader, is not much older than the close of the last century. Scotland has the merit of having led the way; Reid, Stewart, Robison, and Playfair turned that which had been a blind veneration into a rational worship; and I should suspect that more have read Lord Bacon within these thirty years than in the two preceding centuries. It may be an usual consequence of the enthusiastic panegyrics lately poured upon his name, that a more positive efficacy has sometimes been attributed to his philosophical writings than they really possessed, and it might be asked whether Italy, where he was probably not much known, were not the true school of experimental philosophy in Europe, whether his methods of investigation were not chiefly such as men of sagacity and lovers of truth might simultaneously have devised. But, whatever may have been the case with respect to actual discoveries in science, we must give to written wisdom its proper meed; no books prior to those of Lord Bacon carried mankind so far on

* The De Augmentis was only once published after the first edition, in 1638. An indifferent translation, by Gilbert Watts, came out in 1640. No edition of Bacon's Works was published in England before 1730; another appeared in 1740, and there have been several since. But they had been printed at Frankfort in 1665. It is unnecessary to observe, that many copies of the foreign editions were brought to this country. This is mostly taken from Mr. Montagu's account.

CHAP. III.

the road to truth; none have obtained so thorough a triumph over arrogant usurpation without seeking to substitute another; and he may be compared with those liberators of nations, who have given them laws by which they might govern themselves, and retained no homage but their gratitude.*

* I have met, since this passage was written, with one in Stewart's Life of Reid, which seems to state the *effects* of Bacon's philosophy in a just and temperate spirit, and which I rather quote, because this writer has, by his eulogies on that philosophy, led some to an exaggerated notion. "The influence of Bacon's genius on the subsequent progress of physical discovery has been seldom duly appreciated; by some writers almost entirely overlooked, and by others considered as the sole cause of the reformation in science which has since taken place. Of these two extremes, the latter certainly is the least wide of the truth: for in the whole history of letters no other individual can be mentioned whose exertions have had so indisputable an effect in forwarding the intellectual progress of mankind. On the other hand it must be acknowledged that before the æra when Bacon appeared, various philosophers in different parts of Europe had struck into the right path; and it may perhaps be doubted, whether any one important rule with respect to the true method of investigation be contained in his works, of which no hint can be traced in those of his predecessors. His great merit lay in concentrating their feeble and scattered lights; fixing the attention of philosophers on the distinguishing characteristics of true and of false science, by a felicity of illustration peculiar to himself, seconded by the commanding powers of a bold and figurative eloquence. The method of investigation which he recommended had been previously followed in every instance in which any solid discovery had been made with respect to the laws of nature; but it had been followed accidentally and without any regular preconceived design; and it was reserved for him to reduce to rule and method what others had effected, either fortuitously, or from some momentary glimpse of the truth. These remarks are not intended to detract from the just glory of Bacon; for they apply to all those, without exception, who have systematised the principles of any of the arts. Indeed they apply less forcibly to him than to any other philosopher whose studies have been directed to objects analogous to his; inasmuch as we know of no art of which the rules have been reduced successfully into a didactic form, when the art itself was as much in infancy as experimental philosophy was when Bacon wrote." Account of Life and Writings of Reid, sect. 2.

CHAP. III.

SECT. III.

On the Metaphysical Philosophy of Descartes.

Early life of Descartes.

81. RENÉ DESCARTES was born in 1596 of an ancient family in Touraine. An inquisitive curiosity into the nature and causes of all he saw is said to have distinguished his childhood, and this was certainly accompanied by an uncommon facility and clearness of apprehension. At a very early age he entered the college of the Jesuits at La Fleche, and passed through their entire course of literature and philosophy. It was now, at the age of sixteen, as he tells us, that he began to reflect, with little satisfaction, on his studies, finding his mind beset with error, and obliged to confess that he had learned nothing but the conviction of his ignorance. Yet he knew that he had been educated in a famous school, and that he was not deemed behind his contemporaries. The ethics, the logic, even the geometry of the ancients, did not fill his mind with that clear stream of truth, for which he was ever thirsting. On leaving La Fleche, the young Descartes mingled for some years in the world, and served as a volunteer both under Prince Maurice, and in the Imperial army. Yet during this period there were intervals when he withdrew himself wholly from society, and devoted his leisure to mathematical science. Some germs also of his peculiar philosophy were already ripening in his mind.

His beginning to philosophise.

82. Descartes was twenty-three years old when passing a solitary winter in his quarters at Neu-

CHAP. III.

burg on the Danube, he began to resolve in his mind the futility of all existing systems of philosophy, and the discrepancy of opinions among the generality of mankind, which rendered it probable that no one had yet found out the road to real science. He determined therefore to set about the investigation of truth for himself, erasing from his mind all pre-conceived judgments, as having been hastily and precariously taken up. He laid down for his guidance a few fundamental rules of logic, such as to admit nothing as true which he did not clearly perceive, and to proceed from the simpler notions to the more complex, taking the method of geometers, by which they had gone so much farther than others, for the true art of reasoning. Commencing therefore with the mathematical sciences, and observing that, however different in their subjects, they treat properly of nothing but the relations of quantity, he fell, almost accidentally, as his words seem to import, on the great discovery that geometrical curves may be expressed algebraically.* This gave him more hope of success in applying his method to other parts of philosophy.

He retires to Holland.

83. Nine years more elapsed, during which Descartes, though he quitted military service, continued to observe mankind in various parts of Europe, still keeping his heart fixed on the great aim he had proposed to himself, but, as he confesses, without having framed the scheme of any philosophy beyond those of his contemporaries. He deemed his

* Œuvres de Descartes, par Cousin, Paris, 1824, vol. i. p. 143.

time of life immature for so stupendous a task. But at the age of thirty-three, with little notice to his friends, he quitted Paris, convinced that absolute retirement was indispensable for that rigorous investigation of first principles he now determined to institute, and retired into Holland. In this country he remained eight years so completely aloof from the distractions of the world, that he concealed his very place of residence, though preserving an intercourse of letters with many friends in France.

His publications.

84. In 1637 he broke upon the world with a volume containing the Discourse upon Method, the Dioptrics, the Meteors, and the Geometry. It is only with the first that we are for the present concerned.* In this discourse, the most interesting perhaps of Descartes' writings, on account of the picture of his life, and of the progress of his studies that it furnishes, we find the Cartesian metaphysics, which do not consist of many articles, almost as fully detailed as in any of his later works. In the Meditationes de Prima Philosophia, published in Latin, 1641, these fundamental principles are laid down again more at length. He invited the criticism of philosophers on these famous Meditations. They did not refuse the challenge; and seven sets of objections, from as many different quarters, with seven replies from Descartes himself, are subjoined to the later editions of the Meditations. The Principles of Philosophy, published in Latin in 1644, contains what may be reckoned the final statement,

* Id. p. 121—212.

CHAP. III.

which occupies most of the first book, written with uncommon conciseness and precision. The beauty of philosophical style which distinguished Descartes is never more seen than in this first book of the Principia, the translation of which was revised by Clerselier, an eminent friend of the author. It is a contrast at once to the elliptical brevity of Aristotle, who hints, or has been supposed to hint, the most important positions in a short clause, and to the verbose, figurative declamation of many modern metaphysicians. In this admirable perspicuity Descartes was imitated by his disciples Arnaud and Malebranche, especially the former. His unfinished posthumous treatise, the "Inquiry after Truth by Natural Reason," is not carried farther than a partial development of the same leading principles of Cartesianism. There is consequently a great deal of apparent repetition in the works of Descartes, but such as on attentive consideration will show, not perhaps much real variance, but some new lights that had occurred to the author in the course of his reflections.*

He begins by doubting all.

85. In pursuing the examination of the first principles of knowledge, Descartes perceived not only that he had cause to doubt of the various opinions he had found current among men, from that very circumstance of their variety, but that

* A work has lately been published, Essais Philosophiques, suivis de la Metaphysique de Descartes resemble et mise en ordre, par L. A. Gruyer, 4 vols., Bruxelles, 1832. In the fourth volume we find the metaphysical passages in the writings of Descartes, including his correspondence, arranged methodically in his own words, but with the omission of a large part of the objections to the Meditations and of his replies. I did not however see this work in time to make use of it.

the sources of all that he had received for truth themselves, namely, the senses, had afforded him no indisputable certainty. He began to recollect how often he had been misled by appearances, which had at first sight given no intimation of their fallacy, and asked himself in vain, by what infallible test he could discern the reality of external objects, or at least their conformity to his idea of them. The strong impressions made in sleep led him to inquire whether all he saw and felt might not be in a dream. It was true that there seemed to be some notions more elementary than the rest, such as extension, figure, duration, which could not be reckoned fallacious; nor could he avoid owning that, if there were not an existing triangle in the world, the angles of one conceived by the mind, though it were in sleep, must appear equal to two right angles. But even in this certitude of demonstration he soon found something deficient; to err in geometrical reasoning is not impossible: why might he not err in this? especially in a train of consequences, the particular terms of which are not at the same instant present to the mind. But above all, there might be a superior being, powerful enough and willing to deceive him. It was no kind of answer to treat this as improbable, or as an arbitrary hypothesis. He had laid down as a maxim that nothing could be received as truth which was not demonstrable, and in one place, rather hyperbolically, and indeed extravagantly in appearance, says that he made little difference between merely probable and false suppositions; meaning this, how-

CHAP. III. ever, as we may presume, in the sense of geometers, who would say the same thing.

His first step in knowledge.

86. But, divesting himself thus of all belief in what the world deemed most unquestionable, plunged in an abyss, as it seemed for a time, he soon found his feet on a rock, from which he sprang upwards to an unclouded sun. Doubting all things, abandoning all things, he came to the question, what is it that doubts and denies? Something it must be; he might be deceived by a superior power, but it was he that was deceived. He felt his own existence; the proof of it was that he did feel it; that he had affirmed, that he now doubted, in a word, that he was a thinking substance. *Cogito; Ergo sum*—this famous enthymem of the Cartesian philosophy veiled in rather formal language that which was to him, and must be to us all, the eternal basis of conviction, which no argument can strengthen, which no sophistry can impair, the consciousness of a self within, a percipient indivisible Ego.* The only proof of this is that it admits of no proof, that no man can pretend to doubt of his own existence with sincerity, or to express a doubt without absurd and inconsistent language.

His mind

87. The scepticism of Descartes, it appears,

* This word, introduced by the Germans, or originally perhaps by the old Cartesians, is rather awkward, but far less so than the English pronoun I, which is also equivocal in sound. Stewart has adopted it as the lesser evil, and it seems reasonable not to scruple a word so convenient, if not necessary, to express the unity of the conscious principle. If it had been employed earlier, I am apt to think that some great metaphysical extravagances would have been avoided, and some fundamental truths more clearly apprehended. Fichte is well known to have made the grand division of *Ich* and *Nicht Ich*, *Ego* and *Non Ego*, the basis of his philosophy; in other words, the difference of subjective and objective reality.

which is merely provisional, is not at all similar to that of the Pyrrhonists, though some of his arguments may have been shafts from their quiver. Nor did he make use, which is somewhat remarkable, of the reasonings afterwards employed by Berkley against the material world, though no one more frequently distinguished than Des Cartes between the objective reality, as it was then supposed to be, of ideas in the mind, and the external or sensible reality of things. Scepticism in fact was so far from being characteristic of his disposition, that his errors sprang chiefly from the opposite source, little as he was aware of it, from an undue positiveness in theories which he could not demonstrate, or even render highly probable.*

not sceptical.

88. The certainty of an existing Ego easily led him to that of the operations of the mind, called afterwards by Locke ideas of reflection, the believing, doubting, willing, loving, fearing, which he

He arrives at more certainty.

* One of the rules Descartes lays down in his posthumous art of logic, is that we ought never to busy ourselves except about objects concerning which our understanding appears capable of acquiring an unquestionable and certain knowledge, vol. xi. p. 204. This is at least too unlimited a proposition, and would exclude, not indeed all probability, but all inquiries which must by necessity end in nothing more than probability. Accordingly we find in the next pages, that he made little account of any sciences but arithmetic and geometry, or such others as equal them in certainty. "From all this," he concludes, "we may infer, not that arithmetic and geometry are the only sciences which we must learn, but that he who seeks the road to truth should not trouble himself with any object of which he cannot have as certain a knowledge as of arithmetical and geometrical demonstrations." It is unnecessary to observe what havoc this would make with investigations, even in physics, of the highest importance to mankind.

Beattie, in the essay on Truth, part ii. chap. 2., has made some unfounded criticisms on the scepticism of Descartes, and endeavours to turn into ridicule his, Cogito; ergo sum. Yet if any one should deny his own, or our existence, I do not see how we *could* refute him, were he *worthy* of refutation, but by some such language; and, in fact, it is what Beattie himself says, more paraphrastically, in answering Hume.

CHAP. III.

knew by consciousness, and indeed by means of which alone he knew that the Ego existed. He now proceeded a step farther; and reflecting on the simplest truths of arithmetic and geometry, saw that it was as impossible to doubt of them as of the acts of his mind. But as he had before tried to doubt even of these, on the hypothesis that he might be deceived by a superior intelligent power, he resolved to inquire whether such a power existed, and if it did, whether it could be a deceiver. The affirmative of the former, and the negative of the latter question Descartes established by that extremely subtle reasoning so much celebrated in the seventeenth century, but which has less frequently been deemed conclusive in later times. It is at least that which no man, not fitted by long practice for metaphysical researches, will pretend to embrace.

His proof of a Deity.

89. The substance of his argument was this. He found within himself the idea of a perfect Intelligence, eternal, infinite, neçessary. This could not come from himself, nor from external things, because both were imperfect, and there could be no more in the effect than there is in the cause. And this idea requiring a cause, it could have none but an actual being, not a possible being, which is undistinguishable from mere non-entity. If however this should be denied, he inquires whether he, with this idea of God, could have existed by any other cause, if there were no God. Not, he argues, by himself; for if he were the author of his own being, he would have given himself every perfection, in a word, would have been God. Not by his parents, for the same might be said of them,

CHAP. III.

and so forth, if we remount to a series of productive beings. Besides this, as much power is required to preserve as to create, and the continuance of existence in the effect implies the continued operation of the cause.

Another proof of it.

90. With this argument, in itself sufficiently refined, Descartes blended another still more distant from common apprehension. Necessary existence is involved in the idea of God. All other beings are conceivable in their essence, as things possible; in God alone his essence and existence are inseparable. Existence is necessary to perfection; hence a perfect being, or God, cannot be conceived without necessary existence. Though I do not know that I have misrepresented Descartes in this result of his very subtle argument, it is difficult not to treat it as a sophism. And it was always objected by his adversaries, that he inferred the necessity of the thing from the necessity of the idea, which was the very point in question. It seems impossible to vindicate many of his expressions, from which he never receded in the controversy to which his meditations gave rise. But the long habit of repeating in his mind the same series of reasonings gave Descartes, as it will always do, an inward assurance of their certainty, which could not be weakened by any objection. The former argument for the being of God, whether satisfactory or not, is to be distinguished from the present.*

* "From what is said already of the ignorance we are in of the essence of mind, it is evident that we are not able to know whether any mind be necessarily existent by a necessity à priori founded in its essence, as we have showed time and space to be. Some philosophers think that such a necessity may be demonstrated of

CHAP. III.

His deductions from this.

91. From the idea of a perfect being Descartes immediately deduced the truth of his belief in an God from the nature of perfection. For God being infinitely, that is, absolutely perfect, they say he must needs be necessarily existent; because, say they, necessary existence is one of the greatest of perfections. But I take this to be one of those false and imaginary arguments, that are founded in the abuse of certain terms; and of all others this word, perfection, seems to have suffered most this way. I wish I could clearly understand what these philosophers mean by the word perfection, when they thus say, that necessity of existence is perfection. Does perfection here signify the same thing that it does, when we say that God is infinitely good, omnipotent, omniscient? Surely perfections are properly asserted of the several powers that attend the essences of things, and not of any thing else, but in a very unnatural and improper sense. Perfection is a term of relation, and its sense implies a fitness or agreement to some certain end, and most properly to some power in the thing that is denominated perfect. The term, as the etymology of it shows, is taken from the operation of artists. When an artist proposes to himself to make any thing that shall be serviceable to a certain effect, his work is called more or less perfect, according as it agrees more or less with the design of the artist. From arts, by a similitude of sense, this word has been introduced into morality, and signifies that quality of an agent by which it is able to act agreeable to the end its actions tend to. The metaphysicians who reduce every thing to transcendental considerations, have also translated this term into their science, and use it to signify the agreement that any thing has with that idea, which it is required that thing should answer to. This perfection therefore belongs to those attributes that constitute the essence of a thing; and that being is properly called the most perfect which has all, the best, and each the completest in its kind of those attributes, which can be united in one essence. Perfection therefore belongs to the essence of things, and not properly to their existence; which is not a perfection of any thing, no attribute of it, but only the mere constitution of it *in rerum natura*. Necessary existence, therefore, which is a mode of existence, is not a perfection, it being no attribute of the thing no more than existence is, which it is a mode of. But it may be said, that though necessary existence is not a perfection in itself, yet it is so in its cause, upon account of that attribute of the entity from whence it flows; that that attribute must of all others be the most perfect and most excellent, which necessary existence flows from, it being such as cannot be conceived otherwise than as existing. But what excellency, what perfection is there in all this? Space is necessarily existent on account of extension, which cannot be conceived otherwise than as existing. But what perfection is there in space upon this account, which can in no manner act on any thing, which is entirely devoid of all power, wherein I have showed all perfections to consist? Therefore necessary existence, abstractedly considered, is no perfection; and therefore the idea of infinite perfection does not include, and consequently not prove, God to be necessarily existence. [sic] If he

CHAP. III.

external world, and in the inferences of his reason. For to deceive his creatures would be an imperfection in God; but God is perfect. Whatever therefore is clearly and distinctly apprehended by our reason, must be true. We have only to be on our guard against our own precipitancy and prejudice, or surrender of our reason to the authority of others. It is not by our understanding, such as God gave it to us, that we are deceived; but the exercise of our free-will, a high prerogative of our nature, is often so incautious as to make us not discern truth from falsehood, and affirm or deny, by a voluntary act, that which we do not distinctly apprehend. The properties of quantity, founded on our ideas of extension and number, are distinctly perceived by our minds, and hence the sciences of arithmetic and geometry are certainly true. But when he turns his thoughts to the phenomena of external sensation, Descartes cannot wholly extricate himself from his original concession, the basis of his doubt, that the senses do sometimes deceive us. He endeavours to reconcile this with his own theory, which had built the certainty of all that we clearly hold certain on the perfect veracity of God.

Primary and secondary qualities.

92. It is in this inquiry that he reaches that important distinction between the primary and

be so, it is on account of those attributes of his essence which we have no knowledge of."

I have made this extract from a very short tract, called Contemplatio Philosophica, by Brook Taylor, which I found in an unpublished memoir of his life printed by the late Sir William Young in 1793. It bespeaks the clear and acute understanding of this celebrated philosopher, and appears to me an entire refutation of the scholastic argument of Descartes; one more fit for the Anselms and such dealers in words, from whom it came, than for himself.

CHAP. III.

secondary properties of matter, the latter being modifications of the former, relative only to our apprehension, but not inherent in things, which, without being wholly new, contradicted the Aristotelian theories of the schools*; and he remarked that we are never, strictly speaking, deceived by our senses, but by the inferences which we draw from them.

93. Such is nearly the substance, exclusive of a great variety of more or less episodical theories, of the three metaphysical works of Descartes, the history of the soul's progress from opinion to doubt, and from doubt to certainty. Few would dispute, at the present day, that he has destroyed too much of his foundations to render his superstructure stable; and to readers averse from metaphysical reflection, he must seem little else than an idle theorist, weaving cobwebs for pastime which common sense sweeps away. It is fair however to observe, that no one was more careful than Descartes to guard against any practical scepticism in

* See Stewart's First Dissertation on the Progress of Philosophy. This writer has justly observed, that many persons conceive *colour* to be inherent in the object, so that the censure of Reid on Descartes and his followers, as having pretended to discover what no one doubted, is at least unreasonable in this respect. A late writer has gone so far as to say: "Nothing at first can seem a more rational, obvious, and incontrovertible conclusion, than that the colour of a body is an inherent quality, like its weight, hardness, &c.; and that to *see* the object, and to see it of *its own colour*, when nothing intervenes between our eyes and it, are one and the same thing. Yet this is only a prejudice," &c. Herschel's Discourse on Nat. Philos. p. 82. I almost even suspect that the notion of sounds and smells being secondary or merely sensible qualities, is not distinct in all men's minds. But after we are become familiar with correct ideas, it is not easy to revive prejudices in our imagination. In the same page of Stewart's Dissertation, he has been led, by dislike of the university of Oxford, to misconceive, in an extraordinary manner, a passage of Addison in the Guardian, which is evidently a sportive ridicule of the Cartesian theory, and is absolutely inapplicable to the Aristotelian.

the affairs of life. He even goes so far as to maintain, that a man having adopted any practical opinion on such grounds as seem probable should pursue it with as much steadiness as if it were founded on demonstration; observing, however, as a general rule, to choose the most moderate opinions among those which he should find current in his own country.*

Objections made to his Meditations.

94. The objections adduced against the Meditations are in a series of seven. The first are by a theologian named Caterus, the second by Mersenne, the third by Hobbes, the fourth by Arnauld, the fifth by Gassendi, the sixth by some anonymous writers, the seventh by a Jesuit of the name of Bourdin. To all of these Descartes replied with spirit and acuteness. By far the most important controversy was with Gassendi, whose objections were stated more briefly, and I think with less skill, by Hobbes. It was the first trumpet in the new philosophy of an ancient war between the sensual and ideal schools of psychology. Descartes had revived, and placed in a clearer light, the doctrine of mind, as not absolutely dependent upon the senses, nor of the same nature as their objects. Stewart does not acknowledge him as the first teacher of the soul's immateriality. "That many of the schoolmen, and that the wisest of the ancient philosophers, when they described the mind as a spirit, or as a spark of celestial fire, employed these expressions, not with any intention to materialize its essence, but merely from want of more unexcep-

* Vol. i. p. 147. Vol. iii. p 64.

CHAP. III.

tionable language, might be shown with demonstrative evidence, if this were the proper place for entering into the discussion."* But though it cannot be said that Descartes was absolutely the first who maintained the strict immateriality of the soul, it is manifest to any one who has read his correspondence, that the tenet, instead of being general, as we are apt to presume, was by no means in accordance with the common opinion of his age. The fathers, with the exception, perhaps the single one, of Augustin, had taught the corporeity of the thinking substance. Arnauld seems to consider the doctrine of Descartes as almost a novelty in modern times. "What you have written concerning the distinction between the soul and body appears to me very clear, very evident, and quite divine; and as nothing is older than truth, I have had singular pleasure to see that almost the same things have formerly been very perspicuously and agreeably handled by St. Augustin in all his tenth book on the Trinity, but chiefly in the tenth chapter."† But Arnauld himself, in his objections to the Meditations, had put it as at least questionable, whether that which thinks is not something extended, which, besides the usual properties of extended substances, such as mobility and figure, has also this particular virtue and power of thinking.‡ The reply of Descartes removed the difficulties of the illustrious Jansenist, who became an ardent and almost complete disciple of the new philosophy. In a placard against the Cartesian

* Dissertation, ubi suprà.

† Descartes, x. 138.

‡ Id. ii. 14.

philosophy printed in 1647, which seems to have come from Revius, professor of theology at Leyden, it is said: "As far as regards the nature of things, nothing seems to hinder but that the soul may be either a substance, or a mode of corporeal substance."* And More, who had carried on a metaphysical correspondence with Descartes, whom he professed to admire, at least at that time, above all philosophers that had ever existed, without exception of his favourite Plato, extols him after his death in a letter to Clerselier, as having best established the foundations of religion. "For the peripatetics," he says, "pretend that there are certain substantial forms emanating from matter, and so united to it that they cannot subsist without it, to which class these philosophers refer the souls of almost all living beings, even those to which they allow sensation and thought; while the Epicureans, on the other hand, who laugh at substantial forms, ascribe thought to matter itself, so that it is M. Descartes alone of all philosophers, who has at once banished from philosophy all these substantial forms or souls derived from matter, and absolutely divested matter itself of the faculty of feeling and thinking."†

* Vol. x. p. 73.

† Vol. x. p. 386. Even More seems to have been perplexed at one time by the difficulty of accounting for the knowledge and sentiment of disembodied souls, and almost inclined to admit their corporeity. "J'aimerois mieux dire avec les Platoniciens, les anciens pères, et presque tous les philosophes, que les ames humaines, tous les génies tant bons que mauvais, sont corporels, et que par consequent ils ont un sentiment réel, c'est à dire, qui leur vient du corps dont ils sont revetus." This is in a letter to Descartes in 1649, which I have not read in Latin (vol. x. p. 249.). I do not quite understand whether he meant only that the soul, when separated from the gross body, is invested with a substantial clothing, or that there is what we may call an interior body,

CHAP. III.

Theory of memory and imagination.

95. It must be owned that the firm belief of Descartes in the immateriality of the Ego or thinking principle, was accompanied with what in later times would have been deemed rather too great concessions to the materialists. He held the imagination and the memory to be portions of the brain, wherein the images of our sensations are bodily preserved; and even assigned such a motive force to the imagination, as to produce those involuntary actions which we often perform, and all the movements of brutes. "This explains how all the motions of all animals arise, though we grant them no knowledge of things, but only an imagination entirely corporeal, and how all those operations which do not require the concurrence of reason are produced in us." But the whole of his notions as to the connexion of the soul and body, and indeed all his physiological theories, of which he was most enamoured, do little credit to the Cartesian philosophy. They are among those portions of his creed which have lain most open to ridicule, and which it would be useless for us to detail. He seems to have expected more advantage to psychology from anatomical researches than in that state of the science, or even probably in any future state of it, anatomy could afford. When asked once where was his library, he replied, showing a calf he was

a supposed monad, to which the thinking principle is indissolubly united. This is what all materialists mean, who have any clear notions whatever; it is a possible, perhaps a plausible, perhaps even a highly probable, hypothesis, but one which will not prove their theory. The former seems almost an indispensable supposition, if we admit sensibility to phænomena at all in the soul after death; but it is rather, perhaps, a theological than a metaphysical speculation.

dissecting, This is my library.* His treatise on, the passions, a subject so important in the philosophy of the human mind, is made up of crude hypotheses, or at best irrelevant observations, on their physical causes and concomitants.

CHAP. III.

Seat of soul in pineal gland.

96. It may be considered as a part of this syncretism, as we may call it, of the material and immaterial hypotheses, that Descartes fixed the seat of the soul in the conarion, or pineal gland, which he selected as the only part of the brain which is not double. By some mutual communication which he did not profess to explain, though later metaphysicians have attempted to do so, the unextended intelligence, thus confined to a certain spot, receives the sensations which are immediately produced through impressions on the substance of the brain. If he did not solve the problem, be it remembered that the problem has never since been solved. It was objected by a nameless correspondent, who signs himself Hyperaspistes, that the soul being incorporeal could not leave by its operations a trace on the brain, which his theory seemed to imply. Descartes answered, in rather a remarkable passage, that as to things purely intellectual, we do not, properly speaking, remember them at all, as they are equally original thoughts every time they present themselves to the mind, except that they are habitually joined as it were

* Descartes was very fond of dissection: C'est un exercise où je me suis souvent occupé depuis onze ans, et je crois qu'il n'y a guère de médecins qui y ait regardé de si près que moi. Vol. viii. p. 100., also p. 174. and 180.

CHAP. III.

and associated with certain names, which being bodily, make us remember them.*

Gassendi's attacks on the Meditations.

97. If the orthodox of the age were not yet prepared for a doctrine which seemed so favourable at least to natural religion as the immateriality of the soul, it may be readily supposed, that Gassendi, like Hobbes, had imbibed too much of the Epicurean theory to acquiesce in the spiritualizing principles of his adversary. In a sportive style, he addresses him, *O anima!* and Descartes, replying more angrily, retorts upon him the name *O caro!* which he frequently repeats. Though we may lament such unhappy efforts at wit in these great men, the names do not ill represent the spiritual and carnal philosophies; the school that produced Leibnitz, Kant, and Stewart, contrasted with that of Hobbes, Condillac, and Cabanis.

Superiority of Descartes.

98. It was a matter of course that the vulnerable passages of the six Meditations would not escape the spear of so skilful an antagonist as Gassendi. But many of his objections appear to be little more than cavils; and upon the whole, Descartes leaves me with the impression of his great superiority in metaphysical acuteness. It was indeed impossible that men should agree, who persisted in using a different definition of the important word, *idea;* and the same source of interminable controversy

* This passage I must give in French, finding it very obscure, and having translated more according to what I guess, than literally. Mais pour ce qui est des choses purement intellectuelles, à proprement parler on n'en a aucun ressouvenir; et la première fois qu' elles se présentent à l'esprit, on les pense aussi bien que la seconde, si ce n'est peutêtre qu'elles ont coûtume d'être jointes et comme attachées a certains noms qui, etant corporels, font que nous nous ressouvenons aussi d'elles. Vol. viii. p. 271.

has flowed ever since for their disciples. Gassendi adopting the scholastic maxim, "Nothing is in the understanding, which has not been in the sense," carried it so much farther than those from whom it came that he denied any thing to be an idea but what was imagined by the mind. Descartes repeatedly desired both him and Hobbes, whose philosophy was built on the same notion, to remark that he meant by idea, whatever can be conceived by the understanding, though not capable of being represented by the imagination.* Thus we imagine a triangle, but we can only conceive a figure of a thousand sides; we know its existence, and can reason about its properties, but we have no image whatever in the mind, by which we can distinguish such a polygon from one of a smaller or greater number of sides. Hobbes in answer to this threw out a paradox which he

CHAP. III.

* Par le nom d'idée, il veut seulement qu'on entende ici les images des choses materielles dépeintes en la fantaisie corporelle; et cela étant supposé, il lui est aisé de montrer qu'on ne peut avoir propre et véritable idée de Dieu ni d'un ange; mais j'ai souvent averti, et principalement en celui là même, que je prends le nom d'idée pour tout ce qui est conçu immediatement par l'esprit; en sorte que, lorsque je veux et que je crains, parceque je conçois en même temps que je veux et que je crains, ce vouloir et cette crainte sont mis par moi en nombre des idées; et je me suis servi de ce mot, parcequ'il étoit dejà communement reçu par les philosophes pour signifier les formes des conceptions de l'entendement divin, encore que nous ne reconnoissions en Dieu aucune fantaisie ou imagination corporelle, et je n'en savois point de plus propre. Et je pense avoir assez expliqué l'idée de Dieu pour ceux qui veulent conçevoir les sens que je donne à mes paroles; mais pour ceux qui s'attachent à les entendre autrement que je ne fais, je ne le pourrais jamais assez. Vol. i. p. 404. This is in answer to Hobbes; the objections of Hobbes, and Descartes' replies, turn very much on this primary difference between ideas as images, which alone our countryman could understand, and ideas as intellections, conceptions, *νοουμενα*, incapable of being imagined, but not less certainly known and reasoned upon. The French is a translation, but made by Clerselier under the eye of Descartes, so that it may be quoted as an original.

CHAP. III.

has not, at least in so unlimited a manner, repeated, that by reason, that is, by the process of reasoning, we can infer nothing as to the nature of things, but only as to their names. * It is singular that a man conversant at least with the elements of geometry should have fallen into this error. For it does not appear that he meant to speak only of natural substances, as to which his language might seem to be a bad expression of what was afterwards clearly shown by Locke. That the understanding can conceive and reason upon that which the imagination cannot delineate, is evident not only from Descartes' instance of a polygon, but more strikingly by the whole theory of infinites, which are certainly somewhat more than bare words, whatever assistance words may give us in explaining them to others or to ourselves. †

* Que dirons nous maintenant si peutêtre le raisonnement n'est rien autre chose qu'un assemblage et un enchainement de noms par ce mot *est*? D'ou il s'ensuivroit que par la raison nous ne concluons rien de tout touchant la nature des choses, mais seulement touchant leurs appellations, c'est à dire que par elle nous voyons simplement si nous assemblons bien ou mal les noms des choses, selon les conventions que nous avons faites à notre fantaisie touchant leurs significations, p. 476. Descartes merely answered. — L'assemblage qui se fait dans le raisonnement n'est pas celui des noms, mais bien celui des choses signifiées par les noms; et je m'étonne que le contraire puisse venir en l'esprit de personne. Descartes treated Hobbes, whom he did not esteem, with less attention than his other correspondents. Hobbes could not understand what have been called ideas of reflection, such as fear, and thought it was nothing more than the idea of the object feared. "For what else is the fear of a lion," he says, "than the idea of this lion, and the effect which it produces in the heart, which leads us to run away? But this running is not a thought; so that nothing of thought exists in fear but the idea of the object." Descartes only replied, "it is self-evident that it is not the same thing to see a lion and fear him, that it is to see him only," p. 483.

† I suspect, from what I have since read, that Hobbes had a different, and what seems to me a very erroneous view of infinite, or infinitesimal quantities in geometry.

CHAP. III.

Stewart's remarks on Descartes.

99. Dugald Stewart has justly dwelt on the signal service rendered by Descartes to psychological philosophy, by turning the mental vision inward upon itself, and accustoming us to watch the operations of our intellect, which, though employed upon ideas obtained through the senses, are as distinguishable from them as the workman from his work. He has given indeed to Descartes a very proud title, Father of the experimental philosophy of the human mind, as if he were to man what Bacon was to nature.* By patient observation of what

For he answers the old sophism of Zeno, Quicquid dividi potest in partes infinitas est infinitum, in a manner which does not meet the real truth of the case: Dividi posse in partes infinitas nihil aliud est quam dividi posse in partes *quotcunque quis velit.* Logica sive Computatio, c. 5. p. 38. (edit. 1667.)

* Dissertation on Progress of Philosophy. The word experiment must be taken in the sense of observation. Stewart very early took up his admiration for Descartes. "He was the first philosopher who stated in a clear and satisfactory manner the distinction between mind and matter, and who pointed out the proper plan for studying the intellectual philosophy. It is chiefly in consequence of his precise ideas with respect to this distinction, that we may remark in all his metaphysical writings, a perspicuity which is not observable in those of any of his predecessors." Elem. of Philos. of Human Mind, vol. i. (published in 1792) note A. "When Descartes," he says in the dissertation before quoted," established it as a general principle that *nothing conceivable by the power of imagination could throw any light on the operations of thought*, a principle which I consider as exclusively his own, he laid the foundations of the experimental philosophy of the human mind. That the same truth had been previously perceived more or less distinctly by Bacon and others, appears probable from the general complexion of their speculations; but which of them has expressed it with equal precision, or laid it down as a fundamental maxim in their logic?" The words which I have put in italics seem too vaguely and not very clearly expressed, nor am I aware that they are borne out in their literal sense, by any position of Descartes; nor do I apprehend the allusion to Bacon. But it is certain that Descartes, and still more his disciples Arnaud and Malebranche, take better care to distinguish what can be imagined from what can be conceived or understood, than any of the school of Gassendi in this or other countries. One of the great merits of Descartes as a metaphysical writer, not unconnected with this, is that he is generally careful to avoid figurative language in speaking of mental operations, wherein he has much the advantage over Locke.

CHAP. III.

passed within him, by holding his soul as it were an object in a microscope, which is the only process of a good metaphysician, he became habituated to throw away those integuments of sense which hide us from ourselves. Stewart has censured him for the paradox, as he calls it, that the *essence* of mind consists in thinking, and that of matter in extension. That the act of thinking is as inseparable from the mind as extension is from matter, cannot indeed be proved; since, as our thoughts are successive, it is not inconceivable that there may be intervals of duration between them; but it can hardly be reckoned a paradox. But whoever should be led by the word essence to suppose, that Descartes confounded the percipient thinking substance, the Ego, upon whose bosom, like that of the ocean, the waves of perception are raised by every breeze of sense, with the perception itself, or even, what is scarcely more tenable, with the reflective action, or thought; that he anticipated this strange paradox of Hume in his earliest work, from which he silently withdrew in his Essays, would not only do great injustice to one of the acutest understandings that ever came to the subject, but overlook several clear assertions of the distinction, especially in his answer to Hobbes. "The thought," he says, "differs from that which thinks, as the mode from the substance."* And Stewart has in his earliest work

* Vol. i. p. 470. Arnaud objected, in a letter to Descartes, Comment se peut il faire que la pensée constitue l'essence de l'esprit, puisque l'esprit est une substance, et que la pensée semble n'en être qu'un mode? Descartes replied that thought in general, la pensée, ou la nature qui pense, in which he placed the essence of the soul, was very different from such or such particular acts of thinking, vol. vi. p. 153. 160.

justly corrected Reid in this point as to the Cartesian doctrine.*

Paradoxes of Descartes.

100. Several singular positions which have led to an undue depreciation of Descartes in general as a philosopher, occur in his metaphysical writings. Such was his denial of thought, and, as is commonly said, sensation to brutes, which he seems to have founded on the mechanism of the bodily organs, a cause sufficient, in his opinion, to explain all the phænomena of the motions of animals, and to obviate the difficulty of assigning to them immaterial souls †; his rejection of final causes in the explana-

* Philosophy of Human Mind, vol. i. note A. See the Principia, § 63.

† It is a common opinion that Descartes denied all life and sensibility to brutes. But this seems not so clear. Il faut remarquer, he says in a letter to More, where he has been arguing against the existence in brutes of any thinking principle, que je parle de la pensée, non de la vie, ou du sentiment; car je n'ôte la vie à aucun animal, ne la faisant consister que dans la seule chaleur du cœur. Je ne leur refuse pas même le sentiment autant qu'il dépend des organes du corps. vol. x. p. 208. In a longer passage, if he does not express himself very clearly, he admits passions in brutes, and it seems impossible that he could have ascribed passions to what has no sensation. Much of what he here says is very good. Bien que Montaigne et Charron aient dit, qu'il y a plus de différence d'homme à homme que d'homme à bête, il n'est toutefois jamais trouvé aucune bête si parfaite, qu'elle ait usé de quelque signe pour faire entendre à d'autres animaux quelque chose que n'eût point de rapport à ses passions; et il n'y a point d'homme si imparfait qu'il n'en use; en sorte que ceux qui sont sourds et muets inventent des signes particuliers par lesquels ils expriment leur pensées; ce qui me semble un très fort argument pour prouver que ce qui fait que les bêtes ne parlent point comme nous, est qu'elles n'ont aucune pensée, et non point que les organes leur manquent. Et on ne peut dire qu'elles parlent entre elles, mais que nous ne les entendons pas; car *comme les chiens et quelques autres animaux nous expriment leurs passions*, ils nous exprimeroient aussi bien leurs pensées s'ils en avoient. Je sais bien que les bêtes font beaucoup de choses mieux que nous, mais je ne m'en étonne pas; car cela même sert à prouver qu'elles agissent naturellement, et par ressorts, ainsi qu'un horloge; laquelle montre bien mieux l'heure qu'il est, que notre jugement nous l'enseigne. . . . On peut seulement dire que, bien que les bêtes ne fassent aucune action qui nous assure qu'elles pensent, toutefois, à cause que les organes de leurs corps

CHAP. III.

tion of nature, as far above our comprehension, and unnecessary to those who had the internal proof of God's existence; his still more paradoxical tenet that the truth of geometrical theorems, and every other axiom of intuitive certainty, depended upon the will of God; a notion that seems to be a relic of his original scepticism, but which he pertinaciously defends throughout his letters.* From remarkable errors men of original and independent genius are rarely exempt; Descartes had pulled down an edifice constructed by the labours of near two thousand years, with great reason in many respects, yet perhaps with too unlimited a disregard of his predecessors; it was his destiny, as it had been theirs, to be sometimes refuted and depreciated in his turn. But the single fact of his having

ne sont pas fort differens des nôtres, on peut conjecturer qu'il y a quelque pensée jointe à ces organes, ainsi que nous experimentons en nous, bien que la leur soit beaucoup moins parfaite; à quoi je n'ai rien à répondre, si non que si elles pensoient aussi que nous, elles auroient une ame immortelle aussi bien que nous; ce qui n'est pas vraisemblable, à cause qu'il n'y a point de raison pour le croire de quelques animaux, sans le croire de tous. et qu'il y en a plusieurs trop imparfaits pour pouvoir croire cela d'eux, comme sont les huitres, les éponges, &c. vol. ix. p. 425. I do not see the meaning of une ame immortelle in the last sentence; if the words had been une ame immaterielle, it would be to the purpose. More, in a letter to which this is a reply, had argued as if Descartes took brutes for insensible machines, and combats the paradox with the arguments which common sense furnishes. He would even have preferred ascribing immortality to them, as many ancient philosophers did. But surely Descartes, who did not acknowledge any proofs of the immortality of the human soul to be valid, except those founded on revelation, needed not to trouble himself much about this difficulty.

* C'est en effet parler de Dieu comme d'un Jupiter ou d'un Saturne, et l'assujettir au Styx et aux destinées, que de dire que ces vérités sont indépendantes de lui. Ne craignez point, je vous prie, d'assurer et de publier partout que c'est Dieu qui a établi ces lois en la nature, ainsi qu'un roi établit les lois en son royaume. vol. vi. p. 109. He argues as strenuously the same point in p. 132. and p. 307.

first established, both in philosophical and popular belief, the immateriality of the soul, were we even to forget the other great accessions which he made to psychology, would declare the influence he has had on human opinión. From this immateriality, however, he did not derive the tenet of its immortality. He was justly contented to say that from the intrinsic difference between mind and body, the dissolution of the one could not necessarily take away the existence of the other, but that it was for God to determine whether it should continue to exist; and this determination, as he thought, could only be learned from his revealed will. The more powerful arguments, according to general apprehension, which reason affords for the sentient being of the soul after death, did not belong to the metaphysical philosophy of Descartes, and would never have been very satisfactory to his mind. He says, in one of his letters, that "laying aside what faith assures us of, he owns that it is more easy to make conjectures for our own advantage and entertain promising hopes, than to feel any confidence in their accomplishment." *

His just notion of definitions.

101. Descartes was perhaps the first who saw that definitions of words, already as clear as they can be made, are nugatory or impenetrable. This alone would distinguish his philosophy from that of the Aristotelians, who had wearied and confused themselves for twenty centuries with unintelligible endeavours to grasp by definition what refuses to be defined. "Mr. Locke," says Stewart, "claims

* Vol. ix. p. 369.

CHAP. III.

this improvement as entirely his own, but the merit of it unquestionably belongs to Descartes, although it must be owned that he has not always sufficiently attended to it in his researches." * A still more decisive passage to this effect, than that referred to by Stewart in the Principia will be found in the posthumous dialogue on the Search after Truth. It is objected by one of the interlocutors, as it had actually been by Gassendi, that, to prove his existence by the act of thinking, he should first know what existence and what thought is. "I agree with you," the representative of Descartes replies, "that it is necessary to know what doubt is, and what thought is, before we can be fully persuaded of this reasoning; I doubt, therefore I am, or what is the same, I think, therefore I am. But do not imagine that for this purpose you must torture your mind to find out the next genus, or the essential differences, as the logicians talk, and so compose a regular definition. Leave this to such as teach or dispute in the schools. But whoever will examine things by himself, and judge of them according to his understanding, cannot be so senseless as not to see clearly, when he pays attention, what doubting, thinking, being, are, and as to have any need to learn their distinctions. Besides, there are things which we render more obscure, in attempting to

* Dissertation, ubi suprà. Stewart, in his Philosophical Essays, note A, had censured Reid for assigning this remark to Descartes and Locke, but without giving any better reason than that it is found in a work written by Lord Stair; earlier, certainly, than Locke, but not before Descartes. It may be doubtful, as we shall see hereafter, whether Locke has not gone beyond Descartes, or at least distinguished undefinable words more strictly.

define them, because, as they are very simple and very clear, we cannot know and comprehend them better than by themselves. And it should be reckoned among the chief errors that can be committed in science for men to fancy that they can define that which they can only conceive, and distinguish what is clear in it from what is obscure, while they do not see the difference between that which must be defined before it is understood and that which can be fully known by itself. Now, among things which can thus be clearly known by themselves, we must put doubting, thinking, being. For I do not believe any one ever existed so stupid as to need to know what being is before he could affirm that he is; and it is the same of thought and doubt. Nor can he learn these things except by himself, nor be convinced of them but by his own experience, and by that consciousness and inward witness which every man finds in himself when he examines the subject. And as we should define whiteness in vain to a man who can see nothing, while one who can open his eyes and see a white object requires no more, so to know what doubting is, and what thinking is, it is only necessary to doubt and to think." * Nothing could more tend to cut short the verbal cavils of the schoolmen, than this limitation of their favourite exercise, definition. It is due therefore to Descartes, so often accused of appropriating the discoveries of others, that we should establish his right to one of the most important that the new logic has to boast.

* Vol. xi. p. 369.

CHAP. III.

His notion of substances

102. He seems, at one moment, to have been on the point of taking another step very far in advance of his age. "Let us take," he says, "a piece of wax from the honey-comb; it retains some taste and smell, it is hard, it is cold, it has a very marked colour, form, and size. Approach it to the fire; it becomes liquid, warm, inodorous, tasteless; its form and colour are changed, its size is increased. Does the same wax remain after these changes? It must be allowed that it does; no one doubts it, no one thinks otherwise. What was it then that we so distinctly knew to exist in this piece of wax? Nothing certainly that we observed by the senses, since all that the taste, the smell, the sight, the touch reported to us has disappeared, and still the same wax remains." This something which endures under every change of sensible qualities cannot be imagined; for the imagination must represent some of these qualities, and none of them are essential to the thing; it can only be conceived by the understanding.*

not quite correct.

103. It may seem almost surprising to us, after the writings of Locke and his followers on the one hand, and the chemist with his crucible on the other, have chased these abstract substances of material objects from their sanctuaries, that a man of such prodigious acuteness and intense reflection as Descartes should not have remarked that the identity of wax after its liquefaction is merely nominal, and depending on arbitrary language, which in many cases gives new appellations to the

* Meditation Seconde, i. 256.

same aggregation of particles after a change of their sensible qualities; and that all we call substances are but aggregates of resisting moveable corpuscles, which by the laws of nature are capable of affecting our senses differently, according to the combinations they may enter into, and the changes they may successively undergo. But if he had distinctly seen this, which I do not apprehend that he did, it is not likely that he would have divulged the discovery. He had already given alarm to the jealous spirit of orthodoxy by what now appears to many so self-evident, that they have treated the supposed paradox as a trifling with words, the doctrine that colour, heat, smell, and other secondary qualities, or accidents of bodies, do not exist in them, but in our own minds, and are the effects of their intrinsic or primary qualities. It was the tenet of the schools that these were sensible realities, inherent in bodies; and the church held as an article of faith, that the substance of bread being withdrawn from the consecrated wafer, the accidents of that substance remained as before, but independent, and not inherent in any other. Arnauld raised this objection, which Descartes endeavoured to repel by a new theory of transubstantiation; but it always left a shade of suspicion, in the Catholic church of Rome, on the orthodoxy of Cartesianism.

His notions of intuitive truth.

104. "The paramount and indisputable authority which, in all our reasonings concerning the human mind, he ascribes to the evidence of consciousness" is reckoned by Stewart among the great merits of Descartes. It is certain that there

CHAP. III. are truths which we know, as it is called, intuitively, that is, by the mind's immediate inward glance. And reasoning would be interminable, if it did not find its ultimate limit in truths which it cannot prove. Gassendi imputed to Descartes, that, in his fundamental enthymem, Cogito, ergo sum, he supposed a knowledge of the major premise, Quod cogitat, est. But Descartes replied that it was a great error to believe that our knowledge of particular propositions must always be deduced from universals, according to the rules of logic; whereas, on the contrary, it is by means of our knowledge of particulars that we ascend to generals, though it is true that we descend again from them to infer other particular propositions.* It is probable that Gassendi did not make this objection very seriously.

105. Thus the logic of Descartes, using that word for principles that guide our reasoning, was an instrument of defence both against the captiousness of ordinary scepticism, that of the Pyrrhonic school, and against the disputatious dogmatism of those who professed to serve under the banner of Aristotle. He who reposes on his own consciousness, or who recurs to first principles of intuitive knowledge, though he cannot be said to silence his adversary, should have the good sense to be silent himself, which puts equally an end to debate. But so far as we are concerned with the investigation of truth, the Cartesian appeal to our own consciousness, of which Stewart was very fond, just as

* Vol. ii. p. 305. See too the passage, quoted above, in his posthumous dialogue.

it is in principle, *may* end in an assumption of our own prejudices as the standard of belief. Nothing can be truly self-evident, but that which a clear, an honest, and an experienced understanding in another man acknowledges to be so.

CHAP. III.

Treatise on art of logic.

106 Descartes has left a treatise highly valuable, but not very much known, on the art of logic, or rules for the conduct of the understanding.* Once only, in a letter, he has alluded to the name of Bacon.† There are perhaps a few passages in this short tract that remind us of the Novum Organum. But I do not know that the coincidence is such as to warrant a suspicion that he was indebted to it; we may reckon it rather a parallel, than a derivative

* M. Cousin has translated and republished two works of Descartes, which had only appeared in Opera Posthuma Cartesii, Amsterdam, 1701. Their authenticity, from external and intrinsic proofs, is out of question. One of these is that mentioned in the text; entitled "Rules for the Direction of the Understanding;" which, though logical in its subject, takes most of its illustrations from mathematics. The other is a dialogue, left imperfect, in which he sustains the metaphysical principles of his philosophy. Of these two little tracts their editor has said, that "they equal in vigour and perhaps surpass in arrangement the Meditations and Discourse on Method. We see in these more unequivocally the main object of Descartes, and the spirit of the revolution which has created modern philosophy, and placed in the understanding itself the principle of all certainty, the point of departure for all legitimate inquiry. They might seem written but yesterday, and for the present age." Vol. xi. preface, p. 1. I may add to this, that I consider the Rules for the Direction of the Understanding as one of the best works on logic, (in the enlarged sense) which I have ever read; more practically useful, perhaps, to young students than the Novum Organum; and though, as I have said, his illustrations are chiefly mathematical, most of his rules are applicable to the general discipline of the reasoning powers. It occupies little more than one hundred pages, and I think that I am doing a service in recommending it. Many of the rules will, of course, be found in later books; some possibly in earlier. This tract, as well as the dialogue which follows it, is incomplete, a portion being probably lost.

† Si quelqu'un de cette humeur vouloit entreprendre d'écrire l'histoire des apparences célestes selon la méthode de Verulamius. Vol. vi. p. 210.

CHAP. III.

logic; written in the same spirit of cautious, inductive procedure, less brilliant and original in its inventions, but of more general application than the Novum Organum, which is with some difficulty extended beyond the province of natural philosophy. Descartes is as averse as Bacon to syllogistic forms. "Truth," he says, "often escapes from these fetters, in which those who employ them remain entangled. This is less frequently the case with those who make no use of logic, experience showing that the most subtle of sophisms cheat none but sophists themselves, not those who trust to their natural reason. And to convince ourselves how little this syllogistic art serves towards the discovery of truth, we may remark that the logicians can form no syllogism with a true conclusion, unless they are already acquainted with the truth that the syllogism develops. Hence it follows that the vulgar logic is wholly useless to him who would discover truth for himself, though it may assist in explaining to others the truth he already knows, and that it would be better to transfer it as a science from philosophy to rhetoric."*

Merits of his writings.

107. It would occupy too much space to point out the many profound and striking thoughts which this treatise on the conduct of the understanding, and indeed most of the writings of Descartes contain. "The greater part of the questions on which the learned dispute are but questions of words. These occur so frequently that, if philo-

* Vol. xi. p. 255.

sophers would agree on the signification of their words, scarce any of their controversies would remain." This has been continually said since; but it is a proof of some progress in wisdom, when the original thought of one age becomes the truism of the next. No one had been so much on his guard against the equivocation of words, or knew so well their relation to the operations of the mind. And it may be said generally, though not without exception, of the metaphysical writings of Descartes, that we find in them a perspicuity which springs from his unremitting attention to the logical process of inquiry, admitting no doubtful or ambiguous position, and never requiring from his reader a deference to any authority but that of demonstration. It is a great advantage in reading such writers that we are able to discern when they are manifestly in the wrong. The sophisms of Plato, of Aristotle, of the schoolmen, and of a great many recent metaphysicians, are disguised by their obscurity; and while they creep insidiously into the mind of the reader, are always denied and explained away by partial disciples.

His notions of free-will.

108. Stewart has praised Descartes for having recourse to the evidence of consciousness in order to prove the liberty of the will. But he omits to tell us that the notions entertained by this philosopher were not such as have been generally thought compatible with free agency in the only sense that admits of controversy. It was an essential part of the theory of Descartes that God is the cause of all human actions. "Before God sent us into the world," he says in a letter, "he knew exactly

CHAP. III.

what all the inclinations of our will would be; it is he that has implanted them in us; it is he also that has disposed all other things, so that such or such objects should present themselves to us at such or such times, by means of which he has known that our free-will would determine us to such or such actions, and he has willed that it should be so; but he has not willed to compel us thereto."* "We could not demonstrate," he says at another time, "that God exists, except by considering him as a being absolutely perfect; and he could not be absolutely perfect, if there could happen any thing in the world which did not spring entirely from him. . . . Mere philosophy is enough to make us know that there cannot enter the least thought into the mind of man, but God must will and have willed from all eternity that it should enter there."† This is in a letter to his highly intelligent friend, the princess Palatine Elizabeth, granddaughter of James I.; and he proceeds to declare himself strongly in favour of predestination, denying wholly any particular providence, to which she had alluded, as changing the decrees of God, and all efficacy of prayer, except as one link in the chain of his determinations. Descartes therefore, whatever some of his disciples may have become, was far enough from an Arminian theology. "As to free-will," he says elsewhere, "I own that thinking only of ourselves we cannot but reckon it independent, but when we think of the infinite power of God we cannot but believe that all things depend on him, and that consequently our free-will must do so too.

* Vol. ix. p. 371. † Id. p. 246.

... But since our knowledge of the existence of God should not hinder us from being assured of our free-will, because we feel and are conscious of it in ourselves, so that of our free-will should not make us doubt of the existence of God. For the independence which we experience and feel in ourselves, and which is sufficient to make our actions praiseworthy or blameable, is not incompatible with a dependence of another nature, according to which all things are subject to God."*

CHAP. III.

Fame of his system, and attacks upon it.

109. A system so novel, so attractive to the imagination by its bold and brilliant paradoxes as that of Descartes, could not but excite the attention of an age already roused to the desire of a new philosophy, and to the scorn of ancient authority. His first treatises appeared in French; and, though he afterwards employed Latin, his works were very soon translated by his disciples, and under his own care. He wrote in Latin with great perspicuity; in French with liveliness and elegance. His mathematical and optical writings gave him a reputation which envy could not take away, and secured his philosophy from that general ridicule which sometimes overwhelms an obscure author. His very enemies, numerous and vehement as they were, served to enhance the celebrity of the Cartesian system, which he seems to have anticipated by publishing their objections to his Meditations with his own replies. In the universities, bigotted for the most part to Aristotelian authority, he had no chance

* Vol. ix. p. 368. This had originally been stated in the Principia with less confidence, the free-will of man and predetermination of God being both asserted as true, but their co-existence incomprehensible. Vol. iii. p. 86.

CHAP. III.

of public reception; but the influence of the universities was much diminished in France, and a new theory had perhaps better chances in its favour on account of their opposition. But the Jesuits, a more powerful body, were in general adverse to the Cartesian system, and especially some time afterwards, when it was supposed to have the countenance of several leading Jansenists. The Epicurean school, led by Gassendi and Hobbes, presented a formidable phalanx; since it in fact comprehended the wits of the world, the men of indolence and sensuality, quick to discern the many weaknesses of Cartesianism, with no capacity for its excellencies. It is unnecessary to say, how predominant this class was in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, both in France and England.

Controversy with Voet.

110. Descartes was evidently in considerable alarm lest the church should bear with its weight upon his philosophy.* He had the censure on Galileo before his eyes, and certainly used some chicane of words as to the earth's movement upon this account. It was, however, in the Protestant country, which he had chosen as his harbour of refuge, that he was doomed to encounter the roughest storm. Gisbert Voet, an eminent theologian in the university of Utrecht, and the head of the party in the church of Holland, which had been victorious in the synod of Dort, attacked Descartes with

* On a tellement assujetti la théologie à Aristotle, qu'il est impossible d'expliquer une autre philosophie qu'il ne semble d'abord qu'elle soit contre la foi. Et à-propos de ceci, je vous prie de me mander s'il n'y a rien de determiné en la foi touchant l'étendue du monde: savoir s'il est fini ou plutôt infini, et si tout ce qu'on appelle espaces imaginaires soient des corps créés et véritables. Vol. vi. p. 73.

all the virulence and bigotry characteristic of his school of divinity. The famous demonstration of the being of God he asserted to be a cover for atheism, and thus excited a flame of controversy, Descartes being not without supporters in the university, especially Regius, professor of medicine. The philosopher was induced by these assaults to change his residence from a town in the province of Utrecht to Leyden. Voet did not cease to pursue him with outrageous calumny, and succeeded in obtaining decrees of the senate and university, which interdicted Regius from teaching that "new and unproved (præsumpta) philosophy" to his pupils. The war of libels on the Voetian side did not cease for some years, and Descartes replied with no small acrimony against Voet himself. The latter had recourse to the civil power, and instituted a prosecution against Descartes, which was quashed by the interference of the prince of Orange. But many in the university of Leyden, under the influence of a notable theologian of that age, named Triglandius, one of the stoutest champions of Dutch orthodoxy, raised a cry against the Cartesian philosophy as being favourable to Pelagianism and popery, the worst names that could be given in Holland; and it was again through the protection of the prince of Orange that he escaped a public censure. Regius, the most zealous of his original advocates, began to swerve from the fidelity of a sworn disciple, and published a book containing some theories of his own, which Descartes thought himself obliged to disavow. Ultimately he found, like many benefactors of mankind, that he had purchased reputa-

CHAP. III.

tion at the cost of peace; and, after some visits to France, where, probably from the same cause, he never designed to settle, found an honourable asylum and a premature death at the court of Christina. He died in 1651, having worked a more important change in speculative philosophy than any who had preceded him since the revival of learning; for there could be no comparison, in that age, between the celebrity and effect of his writings and those of Lord Bacon. The latter had few avowed enemies, till it was too late to avow enmity.*

Charges of plagiarism.

111. The prejudice against Descartes, especially in his own country, was aggravated by his indiscreet and not very warrantable assumption of perfect originality.† No one, I think, can fairly refuse to own, that the Cartesian metaphysics, taken in their consecutive arrangement, form truly an original system; and it would be equally unjust to deny the splendid discoveries he developed in

* The life of Descartes was written, very fully and with the warmth of a disciple, by Baillet, in two volumes quarto, 1691, of which he afterwards published an abridgment. In this we find at length the attacks made on him by the Voetian theologians. Brucker has given a long and valuable account of the Cartesian philosophy, but not favourable, and perhaps not quite fair. Vol. v. p. 200—334. Buhle is, as usual, much inferior to Brucker. But those who omit the mathematical portion will not find the original works of Descartes very long, and they are well worthy of being read.

† I confess, he says in his logic, that I was born with such a temper, that the chief pleasure I find in study is not from learning the arguments of others, but by inventing my own. This disposition alone impelled me in youth to the study of science; hence, whenever a new book promised by its title some new discovery, before sitting down to read it, I used to try whether my own natural sagacity could lead me to any thing of the kind, and I took care not to lose this innocent pleasure by too hasty a perusal. This answered so often that I at length perceived that I arrived at truth, not as other men do after blind and precarious guesses, by good luck rather than skill, but that long experience had taught me certain fixed rules, which were of surprising utility, and of which I afterwards made use to discover more truths. Vol. xi. p. 252.

algebra and optics. But upon every one subject which Descartes treated, he has not escaped the charge of plagiarism; professing always to be ignorant of what had been done by others, he falls perpetually into their track; more, as his adversaries maintained, than the chances of coincidence could fairly explain. Leibnitz has summed up the claims of earlier writers to the pretended discoveries of Descartes; and certainly it is a pretty long bill to be presented to any author. I shall insert this passage in a note, though much of it has no reference to this portion of the Cartesian philosophy.*

CHAP. III.

* Dogmata ejus metaphysica, velut circa ideas a sensibus remotas, et animæ distinctionem a corpore, et fluxam per se rerum materialium fidem, prorsus Platonica sunt. Argumentum pro existentia Dei, ex eo, quod ens perfectissimum, vel quo majus intelligi non potest, existentiam includit, fuit Anselmi, et in libro "Contra insipientem" inscripto extat inter ejus opera, passimque a scholasticis examinatur. In doctrina de continuo, pleno et loco Aristotelem noster secutus est, Stoicosque in re morali penitus expressit, floriferis ut apes in saltibus omnia libant. In explicatione rerum mechanica Leucippum et Democritum præeuntes habuit, qui et vortices ipsos jam docuerant. Jordanus Brunus easdem fere de magnitudine universi ideas habuisse dicitur, quemadmodum et notavit V. CC. Stephanus Spleissius, ut de Gilberto nil dicam, cujus magneticæ considerationes tum per se, tum ad systema universi applicatæ, Cartesio plurimum profuerunt. Explicationem gravitatis per materiæ solidioris rejectionem in tangente, quod in physica Cartesiana prope pulcherrimum est, didicit ex Keplero, qui similitudine palearum motu aquæ in vase gyrantis ad centrum contrusarum rem explicuit primus. Actionem lucis in distans, similitudine baculi pressi jam veteres adumbravere. Circa iridem a M. Antonio de Dominis non parum lucis accepit. Keplerum fuisse primum suum in dioptricis magistrum, et in eo argumento omnes ante se mortales longo intervallo antegressum, fatetur Cartesius in epistolis familiaribus; nam in scriptis, quæ ipse edidit, longè abest a tali confessione aut laude, tametsi illa ratio, quæ rationum directionem explicat, ex compositione nimirum duplicis conatûs perpendicularis ad superficiem et ad eandem paralleli, dissertè apud Keplerum extet, qui eodem, ut Cartesius, modo æqualitatem angulorum incidentiæ et reflexionis hinc deducit. Idque gratam mentionem ideo merebatur, quod omnis prope Cartesii ratiocinatio huic innititur principio. Legem refractionis primum invenisse Willebroodum Snellium, Isaacus Vossius patefecit, quanquam non ideo negare ausim, Cartesium in eadem incidere potuisse de suo. Negavit in epistolis Vietam sibi lectum, sed Thomæ Harrioti

It may perhaps be thought by candid minds, that we cannot apply the doctrine of chances to coincidence of reasoning in men of acute and inquisitive spirits, as fairly as we may to that of style or imagery; but, if we hold strictly that the older writer may claim the exclusive praise of a philosophical discovery, we must regret to see such a multitude of feathers plucked from the wing of an eagle.

Recent increase of his fame.

112. The name of Descartes as a great metaphysical writer has revived in some measure of late years; and this has been chiefly owing, among ourselves, to Dugald Stewart, in France, to the growing disposition of their philosophers to cast away their idols of the eighteenth century. "I am disposed," says our Scottish philosopher, "to date the origin of the true philosophy of mind from the Principia (why not the earlier works?) of Descartes, rather than from the Organum of Bacon, or the

Angli libros analyticos posthumos anno 1631 editos vidisse multi vix dubitant; usque adeo magnus est eorum consensus cum calculo geometriæ Cartesianæ. Sane jam Harriotus æquationem nihilo æqualem posuit, et hinc derivavit, quomodo oriatur æquatio ex multiplicatione radicum in se invicem, et quomodo radiorum auctione, diminutione, multiplicatione aut divisione variari æquatio possit, et quomodo proinde natura, et constitutio æquationum et radicum cognosci possit ex terminorum habitudine. Itaque narrat celeberrimus Wallisius, Robervalium, qui miratus erat, unde Cartesio in mentem venisset palmarium illud, æquationem ponere æqualem nihilo ad instar unius quantitatis, ostenso sibi a Domino de Cavendish libro Harrioti exclamasse, il l'a vu! il l'a vu! vidit, vidit. Reductionem quadrato-quadratæ æquationis ad cubicam superiori jam sæculo invenit Ludovicus Ferrarius, cujus vitam reliquit Cardanus ejus familiaris. Denique fuit Cartesius, ut a viris doctis dudum notatum est, et ex epistolis nimium apparet, immodicus contemptor aliorum, et famæ cupiditate ab artificiis non abstinens, quæ parum generosa videri possunt. Atque hæc profecto non dico animo obtrectandi viro, quem mirificè æstimo, sed eo consilio, ut cuique suum tribuatur, nec unus omnium laudes absorbeat; justissimum enim est, ut inventoribus suus honos constet, nec sublatis virtutum præmiis præclara faciendi studium refrigescat. Leibnitz, apud Brucker, v. 255.

Essays of Locke; without however meaning to compare the French author with our two countrymen, either as a contributor to our stock of *facts* relating to the intellectual phænomena, or as the author of any important conclusion concerning the general laws to which they may be referred." The excellent edition by M. Cousin, in which alone the entire works of Descartes can be found, is a homage that France has recently offered to his memory, and an important contribution to the studious both of metaphysical and mathematical philosophy. I have made use of no other, though it might be desirable for the inquirer to have the Latin original at his side, especially in those works which have not been seen in French by their author.

SECT. IV.

On the Metaphysical Philosophy of Hobbes.

Metaphysical treatises of Hobbes.

113. THE metaphysical philosophy of Hobbes was promulgated in his treatise on Human Nature, which appeared in 1650. This, with his other works, De Cive, and De Corpore Politico, were fused into that great and general system, which he published in 1651 with the title of Leviathan. The first part of the Leviathan, "Of Man," follows the several chapters of the treatise on Human Nature with much regularity; but so numerous are the enlargements or omissions, so great is the variance with which the author has expressed the same positions, that they should much

rather be considered as two works, than as two editions of the same. They differ more than Lord Bacon's treatise, De Augmentis Scientiarum, does from his Advancement of Learning. I shall however blend the two in a single analysis, and this I shall generally give, as far as is possible, consistently with my own limits, in the very words of Hobbes. His language is so lucid and concise, that it would be almost as improper to put an algebraical process in different terms as some of his metaphysical paragraphs. But as a certain degree of abridgment cannot be dispensed with, the reader must not take it for granted, even where inverted commas denote a closer attention to the text, that nothing is omitted, although, in such cases, I never hold it permissible to make any change.

His theory of sensation

114. All single thoughts, it is the primary tenet of Hobbes, are representations or appearances of some quality of a body without us, which is commonly called an object. "There is no conception in a man's mind, which hath not at first totally, or by parts, been begotten upon the organs of sense. The rest are derived from that original." * In the treatise on Human Nature he dwells long on the immediate causes of sensation; and if no alteration had been made in his manuscript since he wrote his dedication to the Earl of Newcastle in 1640, he must be owned to have anticipated Descartes in one of his most celebrated doctrines.

coincident with Des-car[tes]

"Because the image in vision, consisting in colour and shape, is the knowledge we have of the qualities of the object of that sense, it is no hard matter

* Leviathan, c. 1.

for a man to fall into this opinion, that the same colour and shape are the very qualities themselves; and for the same cause, that sound and noise are the qualities of the bell, or of the air. And this opinion hath been so long received, that the contrary must needs appear a great paradox; and yet the introduction of species visible and intelligible, (which is necessary for the maintenance of that opinion), passing to and fro from the object, is worse than any paradox, as being a plain impossibility. I shall therefore endeavour to make plain these points: 1. That the subject wherein colour and image are inherent, is not the object or thing seen. 2. That there is nothing without us (really) which we call an image or colour. 3. That the said image or colour is but an apposition unto us of the motion, agitation, or alteration, which the object worketh in the brain, or spirits, or some external substance of the head. 4. That, as in vision, so also in conceptions that arise from the other senses, the subject of their inherence is not the object, but the sentient."* And this he goes on to prove. Nothing of this will be found in the Discours sur la Methode, the only work of Descartes then published; and, even if we believe Hobbes to have interpolated this chapter after he had read the Meditations, he has stated the principle so clearly and illustrated it so copiously, that, so far especially as Locke and the English metaphysicians took it up, we may almost reckon him another original source.

* Hum. Nat. c. 2.

CHAP. III.

Imagination and memory.

115. The second chapter of the Leviathan, "On Imagination," begins with one of those acute and original observations we often find in Hobbes: "That when a thing lies still, unless somewhat else stir it, it will lie still for ever, is a truth that no man doubts of. But that when a thing is in motion, it will eternally be in motion, unless somewhat stay it, though the reason be the same, namely, that nothing can change itself, is not so easily assented to. For men measure, not only other men, but all other things, by themselves; and because they find themselves subject after motion to pain and lassitude, think every thing else grows weary of motion and seeks repose of its own accord." The physical principle had lately been established, but the reason here given for the contrary prejudice, though not the sole one, is ingenious and even true. Imagination he defines to be "conception remaining, and by little and little decaying after the act of sense." * This he afterwards expressed less happily, "the gradual decline of the motion in which sense consists;" his phraseology becoming more and more tinctured with the materialism he affected in all his philosophy. Neither definition seems at all applicable to the imagination which calls up long past perceptions. "This decaying sense, when we would express the thing itself (I mean fancy itself), we call imagination, but when we would express the decay, and signify that the sense is fading, old and past, it is called memory. So that imagination and memory are

* Hum. Nat. c. 3.

but one thing, which for divers considerations hath divers names."* It is however evident that imagination and memory are distinguished by something more than their names. The second fundamental error of Hobbes in his metaphysics, his extravagant nominalism, if so it should be called, appears in this sentence, as the first, his materialism, does in that previously quoted.

CHAP. III.

116. The phænomena of dreaming and the phantasms of waking men are considered in this chapter with the keen observation and cool reason of Hobbes.† I am not sure that he has gone more profoundly into psychological speculations in the Leviathan than in the earlier treatise; but it bears witness more frequently to what had probably been the growth of the intervening period, a proneness to political and religious allusion, to magnify civil and to depreciate ecclesiastical power. "If this superstitious fear of spirits were taken away, and with it prognostics from dreams, false prophecies and many other things depending thereon, by which crafty and ambitious persons abuse the simple people, men would be much more fitted than they are for civil obedience. And this ought to be the work of the schools; but they rather nourish such doctrine." ‡

117. The fourth chapter on Human Nature, and the corresponding third chapter of the Leviathan, entitled On Discourse, or the Consequence and Train of Imagination, are among the most remarkable in Hobbes, as they contain the elements of that

Discourse or train of imagination.

* Lev. c. 2. † Hum. Nat. c. 3. ‡ Id. ibid.

CHAP. III.

theory of association, which was slightly touched afterwards by Locke, but developed and pushed to a far greater extent by Hartley. "The cause," he says, "of the coherence or consequence of one conception to another is their first coherence or consequence at that time when they are produced by sense: As for instance from St. Andrew the mind runneth to St. Peter, because their names are read together; from St. Peter to a stone, from the same cause; from stone to foundation, because we see them together; and for the same cause from foundation to church, and from church to people, and from people to tumult; and according to this example the mind may run almost from any thing to any thing."* This he illustrates in the Leviathan by the well-known question suddenly put by one, in conversation about the death of Charles I., "What was the value of a Roman penny?" Of this *discourse*, as he calls it, in a larger sense of the word than is usual with the logicians, he mentions several kinds; and after observing that the remembrance of succession of one thing to another, that is, of what was antecedent and what consequent and what concomitant, is called an experiment, adds that "to have had many experiments, is what we call experience, which is nothing else but remembrance of what antecedents have been followed by what consequents."†

Experience. 118. "No man can have a conception of the future, for the future is not yet, but of our con-

* Hum. Nat. c. 4. § 2. † Id.

ceptions of the past we make a future, or rather call past future relatively." * And again: "The present only has a being in nature; things past have a being in the memory only, but things to come have no being at all; the future being but a fiction of the mind, applying the sequels of actions past to the actions that are present, which with most certainty is done by him that has most experience, but not with certainty enough. And though it be called prudence, when the event answereth our expectation, yet in its own nature it is but presumption." † "When we have observed antecedents and consequents frequently associated, we take one for a sign of the other, as clouds foretell rain, and rain is a sign there have been clouds. But signs are but conjectural, and their assurance is never full or evident. For though a man have always seen the day and night to follow one another hitherto, yet can he not thence conclude they shall do so, or that they have done so, eternally. Experience concludeth nothing universally. But those who have most experience conjecture best, because they have most signs to conjecture by; hence old men, cæteris paribus, and men of quick parts, conjecture better than the young or dull." ‡ "But experience is not to be equalled by any advantage of natural and extemporary wit, though perhaps many young men think the contrary." There is a presumption of the past as well as the future founded on experience, as when from having

* Human Nat. c. 4. § 7. † Lev. c. 3. ‡ Hum. Nat.

CHAP. III.

often seen ashes after fire, we infer from seeing them again that there has been fire. But this is as conjectural as our expectations of the future.*

Unconsci-onableness of infinity.

119. In the last paragraph of the chapter in the Leviathan he adds, what is a very leading principle in the philosophy of Hobbes, but seems to have no particular relation to what has preceded. "Whatsoever we imagine is finite; therefore there is no idea or conception of any thing we call infinite. No man can have in his mind an image of infinite magnitude, nor conceive infinite swiftness, infinite time, or infinite force or infinite power. When we say any thing is infinite, we signify only that we are not able to conceive the ends and bounds of the things named, having no conception of the thing, but of our own inability. And therefore the name of God is used, not to make us conceive him, for he is incomprehensible and his greatness and power are inconceivable, but that we may honour him. Also because whatsoever, as I said before, we conceive, has been perceived first by sense, either all at once, or by parts; a man can have no thought, representing any thing, not subject to sense. No man therefore can conceive any thing, but he must conceive it in some place, and indeed with some determinate magnitude, and which may be divided into parts, nor that any thing is all in this place, and all in another place at the same time, nor that two or more things can be in one and the same place at once. For none of these things ever have, or can be in-

* Lev.

cident to sense, but are absurd speeches, taken upon credit without any signification at all, from deceived philosophers, and deceived or deceiving schoolmen." This, we have seen in the last section, had been already discussed with Descartes. The paralogism of Hobbes consists in his imposing a limited sense on the word idea or conception, and assuming that what cannot be conceived according to that sense has no signification at all.

Origin of language.

120. The next chapter, being the fifth in one treatise, and the fourth in the other, may be reckoned, perhaps, the most valuable as well as original, in the writings of Hobbes. It relates to speech and language. "The invention of printing," he begins by observing, "though ingenious, compared with the invention of letters, is no great matter. . . . . . But the most noble and profitable invention of all others, was that of speech, consisting of names or appellations, and their connexion, whereby men register their thoughts, recall them when they are past, and also declare them one to another for mutual utility and conversation; without which there had been amongst men neither commonwealth, nor society, nor content nor peace, no more than among lions, bears and wolves. The first author of speech was God himself, that instructed Adam how to name such creatures as he presented to his sight; for the Scripture goeth no further in this matter. But this was sufficient to direct him to add more names, as the experience and use of the creatures should give him occasion, and to join them in such manner by degrees, as to make himself understood; and so by succession

CHAP. III.

of time so much language might be gotten as he had found use for, though not so copious as an orator or philosopher has need of."

His political theory interferes.

121. This account of the original of language appears in general as probable as it is succinct and clear. But the assumption that there could have been no society or mutual peace among mankind without language, the ordinary instrument of contract, is too much founded upon his own political speculations. Nor is it proved by the comparison to lions, bears and wolves, even if the analogy could be admitted; since the state of warfare which he here intimates to be natural to man, does not commonly subsist in these wild animals of the same species. *Sævis inter se convenit ursis*, is an old remark. But taking mankind with as much propensity to violence towards each other as Hobbes could suggest, is it speech, or reason and the sense of self-interest, which has restrained this within the boundaries imposed on it by civil society? The position appears to be, that man, with every other faculty and attribute of his nature, except language, could never have lived in community with his fellows. It is manifest, that the mechanism of such a community would have been very imperfect. But possessing his rational powers, it is hard to see why he might not have devised signs to make known his special wants, or why he might not have attained the peculiar prerogative of his species and foundation of society, the exchange of what he liked less for what he liked better.

* Leviathan, c. 4.

122. This will appear more evident, and the exaggerated notions of the school of Hobbes as to the absolute necessity of language to the mutual relations of mankind will be checked by considering what was not so well understood in his age as at present, the intellectual capacities of those who are born deaf, and the resources which they are able to employ. It can hardly be questioned, but that a number of families thrown together in this unfortunate situation, without other intercourse, could by the exercise of their natural reason, as well as the domestic and social affections, constitute themselves into a sort of commonwealth, at least as regular as that of ants and bees; and if the want of language would deprive them of many advantages of polity, it would also secure them from much fraud and conspiracy. But those whom we have known to want the use of speech, have also wanted the sense of hearing, and have thus been shut out from many assistances to the reasoning faculties, which our hypothesis need not exclude. The fair supposition is that of a number of persons merely dumb, and although they would not have laws or learning, it does not seem impossible that they might maintain at least a patriarchal, if not a political, society for many generations. Upon the lowest supposition, they could not be inferior to the Chimpanzees, who are said to live in communities in the forests of Angola.

Necessity of spech exaggerated.

123. The succession of conceptions in the mind depending wholly on that they had one to another when produced by the senses, they cannot be recalled at our choice and the need we have of

Use of names.

CHAP. III.

them, "but as it chanceth us to hear and see such things as shall bring them to our mind. Hence brutes are unable to call what they want to mind, and often, though they hide food, do not know where to find it. But man has the power to set up marks or sensible objects, and remember thereby somewhat past. The most eminent of these are names or articulate sounds, by which we recall some conception of things to which we give those names; as the appellation white bringeth to remembrance the quality of such objects as produce that colour or conception in us. It is by names that we are capable of science, as for instance that of number; for beasts cannot number for want of words, and do not miss one or two out of their young, nor could a man without repeating orally or mentally the words of number, know how many pieces of money may be before him."* We have here another assumption, that the numbering faculty is not stronger in man than in brutes, and also that the former could not have found out how to divide a heap of coins into parcels without the use of words of number. The experiment might be tried with a deaf and dumb child.

Names universal not realities.

124. Of names some are proper, and some common to many or universal, there being nothing in the world universal but names, for the things named are every one of them individual and singular. "One universal name is imposed on many things for their similitude in some quality or other accidents; and whereas a proper name

* Hum. Nat. c. 5.

bringeth to mind one thing only, universals recall any one of those many."* "The universality of one name to many things hath been the cause that men think the things are themselves universal, and so seriously contend that besides Peter and John, and all the rest of the men that are, have been, or shall be in the world, there is yet something else that we call man; viz., man in general, deceiving themselves by taking the universal or general appellation for the thing it signifieth.† For if one should desire the painter to make him the picture of a man, which is as much as to say, of a man in general, he meaneth no more, but that the painter should chuse what man he pleaseth to draw, which must needs be some of them that are, or have been, or may be, none of which are universal. But when he would have him to draw the picture of the king, or any particular person, he limiteth the painter to that one person he chuseth. It is plain therefore that there is

* Lev. c. 4.

† "An universal," he says in his Logic, "is not a name of many things collectively, but of each taken separately (sigillatim sumptorum). Man is not the name of the human species, in general, but of each single man, Peter, John and the rest, separately. Therefore this universal name is not the name of any thing existing in nature, nor of any idea or phantasm formed in the mind, but always of some word or name. Thus when an animal, or a stone, or a ghost (spectrum) or any thing else is called universal, we are not to understand that any man or stone or any thing else was, or is, or can be, an universal, but only that these words animal, stone and the like are universal names, that is, names common to many things, and the conceptions corresponding to them in the mind are the images and phantasms of single animals or other things. And therefore we do not need, in order to understand what is meant by an universal, any other faculty than that of imagination, by which we remember that such words have excited the conception in our minds sometimes of one particular thing, sometimes of another." Cap. 2. § 9. Imagination and memory are used by Hobbes almost as synonyms.

CHAP. III.

nothing universal but names, which are therefore called indefinite." *

How imposed.

125. "By this imposition of names, some of larger, some of stricter signification, we turn the reckoning of the consequences of things imagined in the mind into a reckoning of the consequences of appellations." † Hence he thinks that though a man born deaf and dumb might by meditation know that the angles of one triangle are equal to two right ones, he could not, on seeing another triangle of different shape, infer the same without a similar process. But by the help of words, after having observed the equality is not consequent on any thing peculiar to one triangle, but on the number of sides and angles which is common to all, he registers his discovery in a proposition. This is surely to confound the antecedent process of reasoning with what he calls the registry, which follows it. The instance, however, is not happily chosen, and Hobbes has conceded the whole point in question, by admitting that the truth of the proposition could be *observed*, which cannot require the

* Hum. Nat. c. 5.

† It may deserve to be remarked that Hobbes himself, nominalist as he was, did not limit reasoning to comparison of propositions, as some later writers have been inclined to do, and as in his objections to Descartes, he might seem to do himself. This may be inferred from the sentence quoted in the text, and more expressly, though not quite perspicuously, from a passage in the Computatio, sive Logica, his Latin treatise published after the Leviathan. Quomodo autem animo *sine verbis tacita cogitatione ratiocinando addere et subtrahere solemus* uno aut altero exemplo ostendendum est. Si quis ergo e longinquo aliquid obscurè videat, etsi nulla sint imposita vocabula, habet tamen ejus rei ideam eandem propter quam impositis nunc vocabulis dicit eam rem esse corpus. Postquam autem propius accesserit, videritque eandem rem certo quodam modo nunc uno, nunc alio in loco esse, habebit ejusdem ideam novam, propter quam nunc talem rem *animatam* vocat, &c. p. 2.

use of words.* He expresses the next sentence with more felicity. "And thus the consequence found in one particular comes to be registered and remembered as an universal rule, and discharges our mental reckoning of time and place; and delivers us from all labour of the mind saving the first, and makes that which was found true here and now to be true in all times and places." †

The subject continued.

126. The equivocal use of names makes it often difficult to recover those conceptions for which they were designed "not only in the language of others, wherein we are to consider the drift and occasion and contexture of the speech, as well as the words themselves, but in our own discourse, which being derived from the custom and common use of speech, representeth unto us not our own conceptions. It is therefore a great ability in a man, out of the words, contexture and other circumstances of language to deliver himself from equivocation, and to find out the true meaning of what is said; and this is it we call understand-

* The demonstration of the thirty-second proposition of Euclid could leave no one in doubt whether this property were common to all triangles, after it had been proved in a single instance. It is said, however, to be recorded by an ancient writer, that this discovery was first made as to equilateral, afterwards as to isosceles, and lastly as to other triangles. Stewart's Philosophy of Human Mind, vol. ii. chap. iv. sect. 2. The mode of proof must have been different from that of Euclid. And this might possibly lead us to suspect the truth of the tradition. For if the equality of the angles of a triangle to two right angles admitted of any *elementary* demonstration, such as might occur in the infancy of geometry, without making use of the property of parallel lines, assumed in the twelfth axiom of Euclid, the difficulties consequent on that assumption would readily be evaded. See the Note on Euclid, i. 29. in Playfair, who has given a demonstration of his own, but one which involves the idea of motion rather more than was usual with the Greeks in their elementary propositions.

† Lev.

CHAP. III.

ing."* "If speech be peculiar to man, as for ought I know it is, then is understanding peculiar to him also; understanding being nothing else but conception caused by speech."† This definition is arbitrary and not conformable to the usual sense. "True and false," he observes afterwards, "are attributes of speech not of things; where speech is not, there is neither truth nor falsehood, though there may be error. Hence as truth consists in the right ordering of names in our affirmations, a man that seeks precise truth hath need to remember what every word he uses stands for and place it accordingly. In geometry, the only science hitherto known, men begin by definitions. And every man who aspires to true knowledge, should examine the definitions of former authors, and either correct them or make them anew. For the errors of definitions multiply themselves, according as the reckoning proceeds, and lead men into absurdities, which at last they see, but cannot avoid without reckoning anew from the beginning in which lies the foundation of their errors. . . . . . In the right definition of names, lies the first use of speech, which is the acquisition of science. And in wrong or no definitions lies the first abuse from which proceed all false and senseless tenets, which make those men that take their instruction from the authority of books, and not from their own meditation, to be as much below the condition of ignorant men, as men endued with true science are above it.

* Hum. Nat. † Lev.

For between true science and erroneous doctrine, ignorance is in the middle. Words are wise men's counters, they do but reckon by them; but they are the money of fools." *

CHAP. III.

Names differently imposed.

127. "The names of such things as affect us, that is, which please and displease us, because all men be not alike affected with the same thing, nor the same man at all times, are in the common discourse of men of inconstant signification. For seeing all names are imposed to signify our conceptions, and all our affections are but conceptions, when we conceive the same thoughts differently, we can hardly avoid different naming of them. For though the nature of that we conceive be the same, yet the diversity of our reception of it, in respect of different constitutions of body and prejudices of opinion, gives every thing a tincture of our different passions. And therefore, in reasoning, a man must take heed of words, which, besides the signification of what we imagine of their nature, have a signification also of the nature, disposition and interest of the speaker; such as are the names of virtues and vices; for one man calleth wisdom what another calleth fear, and one cruelty, what another justice; one prodigality, what another magnanimity, and one gravity what another stupidity, &c. And therefore such names can never be true grounds of any ratiocination. No more can metaphors and tropes of speech, but these are less dangerous, because they profess their inconstancy, which the other do

* Lev.

CHAP. III.

not." * Thus ends this chapter of the Leviathan, which, with the corresponding one in the Treatise on Human Nature, are, notwithstanding what appear to me some erroneous principles, as full, perhaps, of deep and original thoughts as any other pages of equal length on the art of reasoning and philosophy of language. Many have borrowed from Hobbes without naming him; and in fact he is the founder of the nominalist school in England. He may probably have conversed with Bacon on these subjects; we see much of that master's style of illustration. But as Bacon was sometimes too excursive to sift particulars, so Hobbes has sometimes wanted a comprehensive view.

Knowledge.

128. "There are," to proceed with Hobbes, "two kinds of knowledge; the one, sense, or knowledge original, and remembrance of the same; the other, science, or knowledge of the truth of propositions, derived from understanding. Both are but experience, one of things from without, the other from the proper use of words in language, and experience being but remembrance, all knowledge is remembrance. Knowledge implies two things, truth and evidence; the latter is the concomitance of a man's conception with the words that signify such conception in the act of ratiocination." If a man does not annex a meaning to his words, his conclusions are not evident to him. "Evidence is to truth, as the sap to the tree, which, so far as it creepeth along with the body and branches,

* Lev.

keepeth them alive; when it forsaketh them they die; for this evidence, which is meaning with our words, is the life of truth." "Science is evidence of truth, from some beginning or principle of sense. The first principle of knowledge is that we have such and such conceptions; the second that we have thus and thus named the things whereof they are conceptions; the third is that we have joined those names in such manner as to make true propositions; the fourth and last is that we have joined these propositions in such manner as they be concluding, and the truth of the conclusion said to be known."*

Reasoning.

129. Reasoning is the addition or subtraction of parcels. "In whatever matter there is room for addition and subtraction, there is room for reason; and where these have no place, then reason has nothing at all to do."† This is neither as perspicuously expressed, nor as satisfactorily illustrated, as is usual with Hobbes; but it is true that all syllogistic reasoning is dependent upon quantity alone, and consequently upon that which is capable of addition and subtraction. This seems not to have been clearly perceived by some writers of the old Aristotelian school, or perhaps by some others, who, as far as I can judge, have a notion that the relation of a genus to a species, or a predicate to its subject, considered merely as to syllogism or deductive reasoning, is something different from that of a whole to its parts; which would deprive that logic of its chief boast, its axiomatic evidence. But, as this

* Hum. Nat. c. 6. † Lev. c. 5.

CHAP. III.

would appear too dry to some readers, I shall pursue it farther in a note.*

* Dugald Stewart (Elements of Philosophy, &c. vol. ii. ch. ii. sect. 2.) has treated this theory of Hobbes on reasoning, as well as that of Condillac, which seems much the same, with great scorn, as "too puerile to admit of (i. e. require) refutation." I do not myself think the language of Hobbes, either here, or as quoted by Stewart from his Latin treatise on Logic, so perspicuous as usual. But I cannot help being of opinion that he is substantially right. For surely, when we assert that A is B, we assert that all things which fall under the class B, taken collectively, comprehend A; or, that $B=A+X$: B being here put, it is to be observed, not for the *res prædicata* itself, but for the concrete, *de quibus prædicandum est*. I mention this, because this elliptical use of the word predicate seems to have occasioned some confusion in writers on logic. The predicate strictly taken, being an attribute or quality, cannot be said to include or contain the subject. But to return, when we say $B=A+X$, or $B-X=A$, since we do not compare, in such a proposition, as is here supposed, A with X, we only mean that $A=A$, or, that a certain part of B is the same as itself. Again, in a particular affirmative, Some A is B, we assert that part of A, or $A-Y$ is contained in B, or that B may be expressed by $\overline{A-Y}+X$. So also when we say, Some A is not B, we equally divide the class or genus B into $A-Y$ and X, or assert that $B=\overline{A-Y}+X$; but, in this case, the subject is no longer $A-Y$, but the remainder, or other part of A, namely, Y; and this is not found in either term of the predicate. Finally, in the universal negative, No A (neither $\overline{A-Y}$ nor Y) is B, the $\overline{A-Y}$ of the predicate vanishes or has no value, and B becomes equal to X, which is incapable of measurement with A, and consequently with either $A-Y$ or Y, which make up A. Now if we combine this with another proposition, in order to form a syllogism, and say that C is A, we find, as before, that $A=C+Z$; and substituting this value of A in the former proposition, it appears that $B=C+Z+X$. Then, in the conclusion, we have, C is B; that is, C is a part of $C+Z+X$. And the same in the three other cases or moods of the figure. This seems to be, in plainer terms, what Hobbes means by addition or subtraction of parcels, and what Condillac means by rather a lax expression, that equations and propositions are at bottom the same, or, as he phrases it better, "l'evidence de raison consiste uniquement dans l'identité." If we add to this, as he probably intended, non-identity, as the condition of all negative conclusions, it seems to be no more than is necessarily involved in the fundamental principle of syllogism, the *dictum de omni et nullo*; which may be thus reduced to its shortest terms; "Whatever can be divided into parts, includes all those parts, and nothing else." This is not limited to mathematical quantity, but includes every thing which admits of more and less. Hobbes has a good passage in his Logic on this: Non putandum est computationi, id est, ratiocinationi in numeris tantum locum esse, tanquam homo a cæteris animantibus, quod censuisse narratur Pythagoras, sola numerandi facultate distinctus esset; nam et magnitudo magnitudini, corpus corpori, motus

130. A man may reckon without the use of words in particular things, as in conjecturing from

CHAP. III.

False reasoning.

motui, tempus tempori, gradus qualitatis gradui, actio actioni, conceptus conceptui, proportio proportioni, oratio orationi, nomen nomini, in quibus omne philosophiæ genus continetur, adjici adimique potest.

But it does not follow by any means that we should assent to the strange passages quoted by Stewart from Condillac and Diderot, which reduce all *knowledge* to identical propositions. Even in geometry, where the objects are strictly magnitudes, the countless variety in which their relations may be exhibited constitutes the riches of that inexhaustible science; and in moral or physical propositions, the relation of quantity between the subject and predicate, as concretes, which enables them to be compared, though it is the sole foundation of all *general deductive reasoning*, or syllogism, has nothing to do with the other properties or relations, of which we obtain a knowledge by means of that comparison. In mathematical reasoning, we infer as to quantity through the medium of quantity; in other reasoning, we use the same medium, but our inference is as to truths which do not lie within that category. Thus in the hacknied instance, All men are mortal; that is, mortal creatures include men and something more, it is absurd to assert, that we only know that men are men. It is true that our knowledge of the truth of the proposition comes by the help of this comparison of men in the subject with men in the predicate; but the very nature of the proposition discovers a constant relation between the individuals of the human species and that mortality which is predicated of them along with others; and it is in this, not in an identical equation, as Diderot seems to have thought, that our *knowledge* consists.

The remarks of Stewart's friend, M. Prevost of Geneva, on the principle of identity as the basis of mathematical science, and which the former has candidly subjoined to his own volume, appear to me very satisfactory. Stewart comes to admit that the dispute is nearly verbal; but we cannot say that he originally treated it as such; and the principle itself, both as applied to geometry and to logic, is, in my opinion, of some importance to the clearness of our conceptions as to those sciences. It may be added, that Stewart's objection to the principle of identity as the basis of geometrical reasoning is less forcible in its application to syllogism. He is willing to admit that magnitudes capable of coincidence by immediate superposition may be reckoned identical, but scruples to apply such a word to those which are dissimilar in figure, as the rectangles of the means and extremes of four proportional lines. Neither one nor the other are, in fact, identical as real quantities, the former being necessarily conceived to differ from each other by position in space, as much as the latter; so that the expression he quotes from Aristotle, ἐν τούτοις ἡ ἰσότης ἑνότης, or any similar one of modern mathematicians, can only refer to the abstract magnitude of their areas, which being divisible into the same number of equal parts,

CHAP. III.

the sight of any thing what is likely to follow; and if he reckons wrong, it is error. But in reasoning on general words, to fall on a false inference is not error, though often so called, but absurdity.* "If a man should talk to me of a round quadrangle, or

they are called the same. And there seems no real difference in this respect between two circles of equal radii and two such rectangles as are supposed above, the identity of their magnitudes being a distinct truth, independent of any consideration either of their figure or their position. But, however this may be, the identity of the subject with part of the predicate in an affirmative proposition is never fictitious but real. It means that the persons or things in the one are strictly the same beings with the persons or things to which they are compared in the other, though, through some difference of relations, or other circumstance, they are expressed in different language. It is needless to give examples, as all those who can read this note at all will know how to find them.

I will here take the liberty to remark, though not closely connected with the present subject, that Archbishop Whateley seems not quite right in saying (Elements of Logic, p. 46.), that in affirmative propositions the predicate is *never* distributed. Besides the numerous instance where this is, in point of fact, the case, all which he excludes, there are many in which it is involved in the very form of the proposition. Such are all those which assert identity or equality, and such also are all those particular affirmations which have previously been *converted* from universals. Of the first sort are all the theorems in geometry, asserting an equality of magnitudes or ratios, in which the subject and predicate may always change places. It is true that in the instance given in the work quoted, that equilateral triangles are equiangular, the converse requires a separate proof, and so in many similar cases. But in these the predicate is not distributed by the form of the proposition; they assert no equality of magnitude.

The position, that where such equality is affirmed, the predicate is not *logically* distributed, would lead to the consequence that it can only be *converted* into a particular affirmation. Thus after proving that the square of the hypothenuse, in all right-angled triangles, is equal to those of the sides, we could only infer that the squares of the sides are *sometimes* equal to that of the hypothenuse, which could not be maintained without rendering the rules of logic ridiculous. The most general mode of considering the question, is to say, as we have done above, that, in an universal affirmative, the predicate B (that is, the class of which B is predicated) is composed of A the subject, and X, an unknown remainder. But if, by the very nature of the proposition, we perceive that X is nothing, or has no value, it is plain that the subject measures the entire predicate, and vice versâ, the predicate measures the subject; in other words, each is taken universally, or distributed.

† Lev. c. 5.

accidents of bread in cheese, or immaterial substances, or of a free subject, a free will, or any free, but free from being hindered by opposition, I should not say he were in error, but that his words were without meaning, that is to say, absurd." Some of these propositions, it will occur, are intelligible in a reasonable sense, and not contradictory, except by means of an arbitrary definition which he who employs them does not admit. It will be observed here, as we have done before, that Hobbes does not confine reckoning, or reasoning, to universals, or even to words.

Its frequency.

131. Man has the exclusive privilege of forming general theorems. But this privilege is allayed by another, that is, by the privilege of absurdity, to which no living creature is subject, but man only. And of men those are of all most subject to it, that profess philosophy. . . . For there is not one that begins his ratiocination from the definitions or explications of the names they are to use, which is a method used only in geometry, whose conclusions have thereby been made indisputable. He then enumerates seven causes of absurd conclusions; the first of which is the want of definitions, the others are erroneous imposition of names. If we can avoid these errors, it is not easy to fall into absurdity (by which he of course only means any wrong conclusion) except perhaps by the length of a reasoning. "For all men," he says, "by nature reason alike, and well, when they have good principles. Hence it appears that reason is not as sense and memory born with us, nor gotten by experience only, as prudence is, but attained

CHAP. III.

by industry, in apt imposing of names, and in getting a good and orderly method of proceeding from the elements to assertions, and so to syllogisms. Children are not endued with reason at all till they have attained the use of speech, but are called reasonable creatures, for the possibility of having the use of reason hereafter. And reasoning serves the generality of mankind very little, though with their natural prudence without science they are in better condition than those who reason ill themselves, or trust those who have done so."* It has been observed by Buhle, that Hobbes had more respect for the Aristotelian forms of logic than his master Bacon. He has in fact written a short treatise, in his Elementa Philosophiæ, on the subject; observing however therein, that a true logic will be sooner learned by attending to geometrical demonstrations than by drudging over the rules of syllogism, as children learn to walk not by precept but by habit.†

Knowledge of fact not derived from reasoning.

132. "No discourse whatever," he says truly in the seventh chapter of the Leviathan, "can end in absolute knowledge of fact past or to come. For as to the knowledge of fact, it is originally sense; and ever after memory. And for the

* Id. ibid.

† Citius multo veram logicam discunt qui mathematicorum demonstrationibus, quam qui logicorum syllogizandi præceptis legendis tempus conterunt, haud aliter quam parvuli pueri gressum formare discunt non præceptis sed sæpe gradiendo. C. iv. p. 30. Atque hæc sufficiunt, (he says afterwards) de syllogismo, qui est tanquam gressus philosophiæ · nam et quantum necesse est ad cognoscendum unde vim suam habeat omnis argumentatio legitima, tantum diximus; et omnia accumulare quæ dici possunt, æque superfluum esset ac si quis ut dixi puerulo ad gradiendum præcepta dare velit; acquiritur enim ratiocinandi ars non præceptis sed usu et lectione eorum librorum in quibus omnia severis demonstrationibus transiguntur. C. v. p. 35.

knowledge of consequence, which I have said before is called science, it is not absolute but conditional. No man can know by discourse that this or that is, has been, or will be, which is to know absolutely; but only that if this is, that is; if this has been, that has been; if this shall be, that shall be; which is to know conditionally, and that not the consequence of one thing to another, but of one name of a thing to another name of the same thing. And therefore when the discourse is put into speech and begins with the definitions of words, and proceeds by connexion of the same into general affirmations, and of those again into syllogisms, the end or last sum is called the conclusion, and the thought of the mind by it signified is that conditional knowledge of the consequence of words which is commonly called science. But if the first ground of such discourse be not definitions; or if definitions be not rightly joined together in syllogisms, then the end or conclusion is again opinion, namely of the truth of somewhat said, though sometimes in absurd and senseless words, without possibility of being understood." *

133. "Belief which is the admitting of propositions upon trust, in many cases is no less free from doubt than perfect and manifest knowledge; for as there is nothing whereof there is not some cause, so when there is doubt, there must be some cause thereof conceived. Now there be many things which we receive from the report of others, of which it is impossible to imagine any cause of Belief.

* Lev. c. 7.

CHAP III.

doubt; for what can be opposed against the consent of all men, in things they can know and have no cause to report otherwise than they are, such as is great part of our histories, unless a man would say that all the world had conspired to deceive him?" * Whatever we believe on the authority of the speaker, he is the object of our faith. Consequently when we believe that the Scriptures are the word of God, having no immediate revelation from God himself, our belief, faith and trust is in the church, whose word we take and acquiesce therein. Hence all we believe on the authority of men, whether they be sent from God or not, is faith in men only.† We have no certain knowledge of the truth of Scripture, but trust the holy men of God's church succeeding one another from the time of those who saw the wondrous works of God Almighty in the flesh. And as we believe the Scriptures to be the word of God on the authority of the church, the interpretation of the Scripture in case of controversy ought to be trusted to the church rather than private opinion.‡

Chart of science.

131. The ninth chapter of the Leviathan contains a synoptical chart of human science or "knowledge of consequences," also called philosophy. He divides it into natural and civil, the former into consequences from accidents common to all bodies, quantity and motion, and those from qualities, otherwise called physics. The first includes astronomy, mechanics, architecture, as well as mathematics. The second he distinguishes into

* Hum. Nat. c. 6. † Lev. c. 7. ‡ Hum. Nat. c. 11.

consequences from qualities of bodies transient, or meteorology, and from those of bodies permanent, such as the stars, the atmosphere, or terrestrial bodies. The last are divided again into those without sense, and those with sense; and these into animals and men. In the consequences from the qualities of animals generally he reckons optics and music; in those from men we find ethics, poetry, rhetoric, and logic. These altogether constitute the first great head of natural philosophy. In the second, or civil philosophy, he includes nothing but the rights and duties of sovereigns and their subjects. This chart of human knowledge is one of the worst that has been propounded, and falls much below that of Bacon.*

Analysis of passions.

135. This is the substance of the philosophy of Hobbes, so far as it relates to the intellectual faculties, and especially to that of reasoning. In the seventh and two following chapters of the treatise on Human Nature, in the ninth and tenth of the Leviathan, he proceeds to the analysis of the passions. The motion in some internal substance of the head, if it does not stop there, producing mere conceptions, proceeds to the heart, helping or hindering the vital motions, which he distinguishes from the voluntary, exciting in us pleasant or painful affections, called passions. We are solicited by these to draw near to that which pleases us, and the contrary. Hence pleasure, love, appetite, desire, are divers names for divers considerations of the same thing. As all conceptions we have immediately by the sense are de-

* Lev. c. 9.

CHAP. III.

light or pain or appetite or fear, so are all the imaginations after sense. But as they are weaker imaginations, so are they also weaker pleasures, or weaker pains.* All delight is appetite and presupposes a further end. There is no utmost end in this world, for while we live we have desires, and desire presupposes a further end. We are not therefore to wonder that men desire more, the more they possess; for felicity, by which we mean continual delight, consists not in having prospered, but in prospering.† Each passion, being, as he fancies, a continuation of the motion which gives rise to a peculiar conception, is associated with it. They all, except such as are immediately connected with sense, consist in the conception of a power to produce some effect. To honour a man, is to conceive that he has an excess of power over some one with whom he is compared; hence qualities indicative of power, and actions significant of it are honourable; riches are honoured as signs of power, and nobility is honourable, as a sign of power in ancestors.‡

Good and evil relative terms.

136. "The constitution of man's body is in perpetual mutation, and hence it is impossible that all the same things should always cause in him the same appetites and aversions; much less can all men consent in the desire of any one object. But whatsoever is the object of any man's appetite or desire, that is it, which he for his part calls good, and the object of his hate and aversion, evil, or of his contempt, vile and inconsiderable.

* Hum. Nat. c. 7. † Id. Lev. c. 11. ‡ Hum. Nat. c. 8.

For these words of good, evil and contemptible are ever used with relation to the person using them; there being nothing simply and absolutely so; nor any common rule of good and evil, to be taken from the nature of the objects themselves, but from the person of the man, where there is no commonwealth, or in a commonwealth from the person that represents us, or from an arbitrator or judge, whom men disagreeing shall by consent set up, and make his sentence the rule thereof." *

CHAP. III.

His paradoxes.

137. In prosecuting this analysis all the passions are resolved into self-love, the pleasure we take in our own power, the pain we suffer in wanting it. Some of his explications are very forced. Thus weeping is said to be from a sense of our want of power. And here comes one of his strange paradoxes. "Men are apt to weep that prosecute revenge, when the revenge is suddenly stopped or frustrated by the repentance of their adversary; *and such are the tears of reconciliation.*" † So resolute was he to resort to any thing the most preposterous, rather than admit a moral feeling in human nature. His account of laughter is better known, and perhaps more probable, though not explaining the whole of the case. After justly observing that whatsoever it be that moves laughter, it must be new and unexpected, he defines it to be "a sudden glory arising from a sudden conception of some eminency in ourselves, by comparison with the infirmity of others, or with our own formerly, for men laugh at the

* Lev. c. 6. † Hum. Nat. c. 9. Lev. c. 6. and 10.

CHAP. III.

follies of themselves past." It might be objected, that those are most prone to laughter, who have least of this glorying in themselves, or undervaluing of their neighbours.

His notion of love.

§ 138. "There is a great difference, between the desire of a man when indefinite, and the same desire limited to one person, and this is that love which is the great theme of poets. But notwithstanding their praises, it must be defined by the word need; for it is a conception a man hath of his need of that one person desired." * "There is yet another passion sometimes called love, but more properly good-will or charity. There can be no greater argument to a man of his own power than to find himself able not only to accomplish his own desires but also to assist other men in theirs; and this is that conception wherein consists charity. In which first is contained that natural affection of parents towards their children, which the Greeks call στοργη, as also that affection wherewith men seek to assist those that adhere unto them. But the affection wherewith men many times bestow their benefits on strangers is not to be called charity, but either contract, whereby they seek to purchase friendship, or fear which makes them to purchase peace." † This is equally contrary to notorious truth, there being neither fear nor contract in generosity towards strangers. It is, however, not so extravagant as a subsequent position, that in beholding the danger of a ship in a tempest, though there is pity, which is grief, yet "the

* Hum. Nat. c. 9. † Id. ibid.

delight in our own security is so far predominant, that men usually are content in such a case to be spectators of the misery of their friends."* CHAP. III.

139. As knowledge begins from experience, new experience is the beginning of new knowledge. Whatever therefore happens new to a man, gives him the hope of knowing somewhat he knew not before. This appetite of knowledge is curiosity. It is peculiar to man; for beasts never regard new things except to discern how far they may be useful, while man looks for the cause and beginning of all he sees.† This attribute of curiosity seems rather hastily denied to beasts. And as men, he says, are always seeking new knowledge, so are they always deriving some new gratification. There is no such thing as perpetual tranquillity of mind while we live here, because life itself is but motion, and can never be without desire, nor without fear, no more than without sense. "What kind of felicity God hath ordained to them that devoutly honour him, a man shall no sooner know than enjoy, being joys that now are as incomprehensible, as the word of schoolmen, beatifical vision, is unintelligible." ‡

Curiosity.

140. From the consideration of the passions Hobbes advances to inquire what are the causes of the difference in the intellectual capacities and dispositions of men. § Their bodily senses are nearly alike, whence he precipitately infers there can be no great difference in the brain. Yet men differ

Difference of intellectual capacities.

* Hum. Nat. c. 9. This is an exaggeration of some well-known lines of Lucretius, which are themselves exaggerated.

† Id. ibid.

‡ Lev. c. 6. and c. 11.

§ Hum. Nat. c. 10.

much in their bodily constitution, whence he derives the principal differences in their minds; some being addicted to sensual pleasures are less curious as to knowledge, or ambitious as to power. This is called dullness, and proceeds from the appetite of bodily delight. The contrary to this is a quick ranging of mind accompanied with curiosity in comparing things that come into it, either as to unexpected similitude, in which fancy consists, or dissimilitude in things appearing the same, which is properly called judgment; "for to judge is nothing else, but to distinguish and discern. And both fancy and judgment are commonly comprehended under the name of wit, which seems to be a tenuity and agility of spirits, contrary to that restiness of the spirits supposed in those who are dull." *

141. We call it levity, when the mind is easily diverted, and the discourse is parenthetical; and this proceeds from curiosity with too much equality and indifference; for when all things make equal impression and delight, they equally throng to be expressed. A different fault is indocibility, or difficulty of being taught; which must arise from a false opinion that men know already the truth of what is called in question; for certainly they are not otherwise so unequal in capacity as not to discern the difference of what is proved and what is not, and therefore if the minds of men were all of white paper, they would all most equally be disposed to acknowledge whatever should be in right

* Hum. Nat.

method, and by right ratiocination delivered to them. But when men have once acquiesced in untrue opinions, and registered them as authentical records in their minds, it is no less impossible to speak intelligibly to such men, than to write legibly on a paper already scribbled over. The immediate cause therefore of indocibility is prejudice, and of prejudice false opinion of our own knowledge.*

Wit and fancy.

142. Intellectual virtues are such abilities as go by the name of a good wit, which may be natural or acquired. "By natural wit," says Hobbes, "I mean not that which a man hath from his birth, for that is nothing else but sense; wherein men differ so little from one another and from brute beasts, as it is not to be reckoned among virtues. But I mean that wit which is gotten by use only and experience, without method, culture or instruction, and consists chiefly in celerity of imagining and steady direction. And the difference in this quickness is caused by that of men's passions that love and dislike some one thing, some another, and therefore some men's thoughts run one way, some another; and are held to, and observe differently the things that pass through their imagination." Fancy is not praised without judgment and discretion, which is properly a discerning of times, places and persons; but judgment and discretion is commended for itself without fancy: without steadiness and direction to some end, a great fancy is one kind of madness, such as they

* Hum. Nat.

CHAP. III.

have who lose themselves in long digressions and parentheses. If the defect of discretion be apparent, how extravagant soever the fancy be, the whole discourse will be taken for a want of wit.*

Differences in the passions.

143. The causes of the difference of wits are in the passions; and the difference of passions proceeds partly from the different constitution of the body and partly from different education. Those passions are chiefly the desire of power, riches, knowledge or honour; all which may be reduced to the first, for riches, knowledge and honour are but several sorts of power. He who has no great passion for any of these, though he may be so far a good man as to be free from giving offence, yet cannot possibly have either a great fancy or much judgment. To have weak passions is dullness, to have passions indifferently for every thing giddiness and distraction, to have stronger passions for any

Madness.

thing than others have is madness. Madness may be the excess of many passions; and the passions themselves, when they lead to evil, are degrees of it. He seems to have had some glimpse of Butler's hypothesis as to the madness of a whole people. "What argument for madness can there be greater, than to clamour, strike and throw stones at our best friends? Yet this is somewhat less than such a multitude will do. For they will clamour, fight against and destroy those by whom all their lifetime before they have been protected, and secured from injury. And if this be madness in the multitude, it is the same in every particular man."†

* Lev. c. 8.

* Id.

CHAP. III.

Unmeaning language.

144. There is a fault in some men's habit of discoursing which may be reckoned a sort of madness, which is when they speak words with no signification at all. "And this is incident to none but those that converse in questions of matters incomprehensible as the schoolmen, or in questions of abstruse philosophy. The common sort of men seldom speak insignificantly, and are therefore by those other egregious persons counted idiots. But to be assured their words are without any thing correspondent to them in the mind, there would need some examples; which if any man require let him take a schoolman into his hands, and see if he can translate any one chapter concerning any difficult point as the Trinity, the Deity, the nature of Christ, transubstantiation, free-will &c. into any of the modern tongues, so as to make the same intelligible, or into any tolerable Latin, such as they were acquainted with, that lived when the Latin tongue was vulgar." And after quoting some words from Suarez, he adds: "When men write whole volumes of such stuff, are they not mad, or intend to make others so?"

Manners.

145. The eleventh chapter of the Leviathan, on manners, by which he means those qualities of mankind which concern their living together in peace and unity, is full of Hobbes's caustic remarks on human nature. Often acute, but always severe, he ascribes overmuch to a deliberate and calculating selfishness. Thus the reverence of antiquity is referred to "the contention men have with the

* Lev.

CHAP. III.

living, not with the dead, to these ascribing more than due that they may obscure the glory of the other." Thus "to have received from one to whom we think ourselves equal, greater benefits than we can hope to requite, disposes to counterfeit love, but really to secret hatred, and puts a man into the estate of a desperate debtor, that in declining the sight of his creditor, tacitly wishes him where he might never see him more. For benefits oblige, and obligation is thraldom; and unrequitable obligation perpetual thraldom, which is to one's equal hateful." He owns however that to have received benefits from a superior, disposes us to love him; and so it does where we can hope to requite even an equal. If these maxims have a certain basis of truth, they have at least the fault of those of Rochefoucault; they are made too generally characteristic of mankind.

Ignorances and prejudice.

146. Ignorance of the signification of words disposes men to take on trust not only the truth they know not, but also errors and nonsense. For neither can be detected without a perfect understanding of words. "But ignorance of the causes and original constitution of right, equity, law and justice disposes a man to make custom and example the rule of his actions, in such manner as to think that unjust which it has been the custom to punish, and that just, of the impunity and approbation of which they can produce an example, or, as the lawyers which only use this false measure of justice barbarously call it, a precedent." "Men appeal from custom to reason and from reason to custom as it serves their turn, receding from custom when

their interest requires it, and setting themselves against reason, as oft as reason is against them; which is the cause that the doctrine of right and wrong is perpetually disputed both by the pen and the sword; whereas the doctrine of lines and figures is not so, because men care not in that subject what is truth, as it is a thing that crosses no man's ambition, profit or lust. For I doubt not, but if it had been a thing contrary to any man's right of dominion, or to the interest of men that have dominion, that the three angles of a triangle should be equal to two angles of a square, that doctrine should have been if not disputed, yet by the burning of all books of geometry, suppressed, as far as he whom it concerned was able."* This excellent piece of satire has been often quoted, and sometimes copied, and does not exaggerate the pertinacity of mankind in resisting the evidence of truth, when it thwarts the interests and passions of any particular sect or community. In the earlier part of the paragraph it seems not so easy to reconcile what Hobbes has said with his general notions of right and justice; since if these resolve themselves, as is his theory, into mere force, there can be little appeal to reason, or to any thing else than custom and precedent, which are commonly the exponents of power.

CHAP. III.

His theory of religion.

147. In the conclusion of this chapter of the Leviathan as well as in the next, he dwells more on the nature of religion than he had done in the former treatise, and so as to subject himself to the imputation of absolute atheism, or at least of a

* Lev. c. 11.

CHAP. III.

denial of most attributes which we assign to the Deity. Curiosity about causes, he says, led men to search out one after the other, till they came to this necessary conclusion, that there is some eternal cause which men call God. But they have no more idea of his nature, than a blind man has of fire, though he knows that there is something that warms him. So by the visible things of this world and their admirable order, a man may conceive there is a cause of them, which men call God, and yet not have an idea or image of him in his mind. And they that make little inquiry into the natural causes of things, are inclined to feign several kinds of powers invisible and to stand in awe of their own imaginations. And this fear of things invisible is the natural seed of that which every one in himself calleth religion, and in them that worship or fear that power otherwise than they do, superstition.

148. As God is incomprehensible, it follows that we can have no conception or image of the Deity; and consequently all his attributes signify our inability or defect of power to conceive any thing concerning his nature, and not any conception of the same, excepting only this, that there is a God. Men that by their own meditation arrive at the acknowledgment of one infinite, omnipotent, and eternal God, chuse rather to confess this is incomprehensible and above their understanding, than to define his nature by spirit incorporeal, and then confess their definition to be unintelligible.* For concerning such spirits he holds

* Lev. c. 12.

that it is not possible by natural means only to come to the knowledge of so much as that there are such things.*

Its supposed sources.

149. Religion he derives from three sources, the desire of men to search for causes, the reference of every thing that has a beginning to some cause, and the observation of the order and consequence of things. But the two former lead to anxiety, for the knowledge that there have been causes of the effects we see, leads us to anticipate that they will in time be the causes of effects to come; so that every man, especially such as are over-provident, is "like Prometheus, the prudent man, as his name implies, who was bound to the hill Caucasus, a place of large prospect, where an eagle feeding on his liver devoured as much by day as was repaired by night; and so he who looks too far before him, has his heart all day long gnawed by the fear of death, poverty or other calamity, and has no repose nor pause but in sleep." This is an allusion made in the style of Lord Bacon. The ignorance of causes makes men fear some invisible agent, like the gods of the Gentiles; but the investigation of them leads us to a God eternal, infinite and omnipotent. This ignorance however, of second causes, conspiring with three other prejudices of mankind, the belief in ghosts, or spirits of subtile bodies, the devotion and reverence generally shown towards what we fear as having power to hurt us, and the taking of things casual for prognostics, are altogether the natural seed of religion, which by reason of the different fancies, judgments

* Hum. Nat. c. 11.

CHAP. III.

and passions of several men hath grown up into ceremonies so different that those which are used by one man are for the most part ridiculous to another. He illustrates this by a variety of instances from ancient superstitions. But the forms of religion are changed when men suspect the wisdom, sincerity or love of those who teach it, or its priests.* The remaining portion of the Leviathan relating to moral and political philosophy, must be deferred to our next chapter.

150. The Elementa Philosophiæ were published by Hobbes in 1655, and dedicated to his constant patron the Earl of Devonshire. These are divided into three parts; entitled De Corpore, De Homine, and De Cive. And the first part has itself three divisions; Logic, the First Philosophy, and Physics. The second part, De Homine, is neither the treatise of Human Nature, nor the corresponding part of the Leviathan, though it contains many things substantially found there. A long disquisition on optics and the nature of vision, chiefly geometrical, is entirely new. The third part, De Cive, is the treatise by that name re-printed, as far as I am aware, without alteration.

151. The first part of the first treatise, entitled Computatio sive Logica, is by no means the least valuable among the philosophical writings of Hobbes. In forty pages the subject is very well and clearly explained, nor do I know that the principles are better laid down, or the rules more

* Lev. c. 12.

sufficiently given in more prolix treatises. Many of his observations, especially as to words, are such as we find in his English works, and perhaps his nominalism is more clearly expressed than it is in them. Of the syllogistic method, at least for the purpose of demonstration, or teaching others, he seems to have entertained a favourable opinion, or even to have held it necessary for real demonstration, as his definition shows. Hobbes appears to be aware of what I do not remember to have seen put by others, that in the natural process of reasoning, the minor premise commonly precedes the major.* It is for want of attending to this, that syllogisms, as usually stated, are apt to have so formal and unnatural a construction. The process of the mind

* In Whateley's Logic, p. 90. it is observed, that "the *proper order* is to place the major premise first, and the minor second; but this does not constitute the major and minor premises," &c. It may be the proper order in one sense, as exhibiting better the foundation of syllogistic reasoning; but it is not that which we commonly follow, either in thinking, or in proving to others. In the rhetorical use of syllogism it can admit of no doubt, that the opposite order is the most striking and persuasive; such as in Cato, "If there be a God, he must delight in virtue; And that which he delights in must be happy." In Euclid's demonstrations this will be found the form usually employed. And, though the rules of grammar are generally illustrated by examples, which is beginning with the major premise, yet the process of reasoning which a boy employs in construing a Latin sentence is the reverse. He observes a nominative case, a verb in the third person, and then applies his general rule, or major, to the particular instance, or minor, so as to infer their agreement. In criminal jurisprudence, the Scots begin with the major premise, or relevancy of the indictment, when there is room for doubt; the English with the minor, or evidence of the fact, reserving the other for what we call motion in arrest of judgment. Instances of both orders are common, but by far the most frequent are of that which the Archbishop of Dublin reckons the less *proper* of the two. Those logicians who fail to direct the student's attention to this, really do not justice to their own favourite science.

CHAP. III.

in this kind of reasoning is explained, in general, with correctness, and, I believe, with originality in the following passage, which I shall transcribe from the Latin, rather than give a version of my own; few probably being likely to read the present section, who are unacquainted with that language. The style of Hobbes, though perspicuous, is concise, and the original words will be more satisfactory than any translation.

152. Syllogismo directo cogitatio in animo respondens est hujusmodi. Primo concipitur phantasma rei nominatæ cum accidente sive affectu ejus propter quem appellatur eo nomine quod est in minore propositione subjectum; deinde animo occurrit phantasma ejusdem rei cum accidente sive affectu propter quem appellatur, quod est in eadem propositione prædicatum. Tertio redit cogitatio rursus ad rem nominatam cum affectu propter quem eo nomine appellatur, quod est in prædicato propositionis majoris. Postremo cum meminerit eos affectus esse omnes unius et ejusdem rei, concludit tria illa nomina ejusdem quoque rei esse nomina; hoc est, conclusionem esse veram. Exempli causa, quando fit syllogismus hic, Homo est Animal, Animal est Corpus, ergo Homo est Corpus, occurrit animo imago hominis loquentis vel differentis [sic, sed lege disserentis], meminitque id quod sic apparet vocari hominem. Deinde occurrit eadem imago ejusdem hominis sese moventis, meminitque id quod sic apparet vocari animal. Tertio recurrit eadem imago hominis locum aliquem sive spatium occupantis, meminitque id quod sic apparet vocari

corpus.* Postremo cum meminerit rem illam quæ et extendebatur secundum locum, et loco movebatur, et oratione utebatur, unam et eandem fuisse, concludit etiam nomina illa tria, Homo, Animal, Corpus, ejusdem rei esse nomina, et proinde, Homo est Corpus, esse propositionem veram. Manifestum hinc est conceptum sive cogitationem quæ respondens syllogismo ex propositionibus universalibus in animo existit, nullam esse in iis animalibus quibus deest usus nominum, cum inter syllogizandum oporteat non modo de re sed etiam alternis vicibus de diversis rei nominibus, quæ propter diversas de re cogitationes adhibitæ sunt, cogitare.

153. The metaphysical philosophy of Hobbes, always bold and original, often acute and profound, without producing an immediate school of disciples like that of Descartes, struck, perhaps, a deeper root in the minds of reflecting men, and has influenced more extensively the general tone of speculation. Locke, who had not read much,

* This is the questionable part of Hobbes's theory of syllogism. According to the common and obvious understanding, the mind, in the major premise, Animal est Corpus, does not reflect on the subject of the minor, Homo, as occupying space, but on the subject of the major, Animal, which includes indeed the former, but is mentally substituted for it. It may sometimes happen, that where this predicate of the minor term is *manifestly* a collective word that comprehends the subject, the latter is not as it were absorbed in it, and may be contemplated by the mind distinctly in the major; as if we say, John is a man; a man feels; we may perhaps have no image in the mind of any man but John. But this is not the case where the predicated quality appertains to many things visibly different from the subject; as in Hobbes's instance, Animal est Corpus, we may surely consider other animals as being extended and occupying space besides men. It does not seem that otherwise there could be any ascending scale from particulars to generals, as far as the reasoning faculties, independent of words, are concerned. And if we begin with the major premise of the syllogism, this will be still more apparent.

CHAP. III.

had certainly read Hobbes, though he does not borrow from him so much as has sometimes been imagined. The French metaphysicians of the next century found him nearer to their own theories than his more celebrated rival in English philosophy. But the writer who has built most upon Hobbes, and may be reckoned, in a certain sense, his commentator, if he who fully explains and develops a system may deserve that name, was Hartley. The theory of association is implied and intimated in many passages of the elder philosopher, though it was first expanded and applied with a diligent, ingenious and comprehensive research, if sometimes in too forced a manner, by his disciple. I use this word without particular inquiry into the direct acquaintance of Hartley with the writings of Hobbes; the subject had been frequently touched in intermediate publications, and, in matters of reasoning, as I have intimated above, little or no presumption of borrowing can be founded on coincidence. Hartley also resembles Hobbes in the extreme to which he has pushed the nominalist theory, in the proneness to materialize all intellectual processes, and either to force all things mysterious to our faculties into something imaginable, or to reject them as unmeaning, in the want, much connected with this, of a steady perception of the difference betweeen the Ego and its objects, in an excessive love of simplifying and generalizing, and in a readiness to adopt explanations neither conformable to reason nor experience, when they fall in

with some single principle, the key that was to unlock every ward of the human soul.

154. In nothing does Hobbes deserve more credit than in having set an example of close observation in the philosophy of the human mind. If he errs, he errs like a man who goes a little out of the right track, not like one who has set out in a wrong one. The eulogy of Stewart on Descartes, that he was the father of this experimental psychology, cannot be strictly wrested from him by Hobbes, inasmuch as the publications of the former are of an earlier date; but we may fairly say that the latter began as soon, and prosecuted his inquiries farther. It seems natural to presume that Hobbes, who is said to have been employed by Bacon in translating some of his works into Latin, had at least been led by him to the inductive process he has more than any other employed. But he has seldom mentioned his predecessor's name; and indeed his mind was of a different stamp; less excursive, less quick in discovering analogies and less fond of reasoning from them, but more close, perhaps more patient, and more apt to follow up a predominant idea, which sometimes becomes one of the 'idola specûs' that deceive him.

CHAP. IV.

HISTORY OF MORAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY, AND OF JURISPRUDENCE FROM 1600 TO 1650.

SECT. I.

ON MORAL PHILOSOPHY.

Casuists of the Roman Church — Suarez on Moral Law — Selden — Charron — La Mothe le Vayer — Bacon's Essays — Feltham — Browne's Religio Medici — Other Writers.

CHAP. IV.

1. In traversing so wide a field as moral and political philosophy, we must still endeavour to distribute the subject according to some order of subdivision, so far at least as the contents of the books themselves which come before us will permit. And we give the first place to those which relating to the moral law both of nature and revelation, connect the proper subject of the present chapter with that of the second and third.

Casuistical writers.

2. We meet here a concourse of volumes occupying no small space in old libraries, the writings of the casuists, chiefly within the Romish church. None perhaps in the whole compass of literature are more neglected by those who do not read with what we may call a professional view; but to the ecclesiastics of that communion they have still a certain value, though far less than when they were first written. The most vital discipline of that

church, the secret of the power of its priesthood, the source of most of the good and evil it can work, is found in the confessional. It is there that the keys are kept; it is there that the lamp burns, whose rays diverge to every portion of human life. No church that has relinquished this prerogative can ever establish a permanent dominion over mankind; none that retains it in effective use can lose the hope or the prospect of being their ruler.

Importance of confession.

Necessity of rules for the confessor.

3. It is manifest that in the common course of this rite, no particular difficulty will arise, nor is the confessor likely to weigh in golden scales the scruples or excuses of ordinary penitents. But peculiar circumstances might be brought before him, wherein there would be a necessity for possessing some rule, least by sanctioning the guilt of the party before him he should incur as much of his own. Treatises therefore of casuistry were written as guides to the confessor, and became the text-books in every course of ecclesiastical education. These were commonly digested in a systematic order, and, what is the unfailing consequence of system, or rather almost part of its definition, spread into minute ramifications, and aimed at comprehending every possible emergency. Casuistry is itself allied to jurisprudence, especially to that of the canon law; and it was natural to transfer the subtlety of distinction and copiousness of partition usual with the jurists, to a science which its professors were apt to treat upon very similar principles.

Increase of casuistical literature.

4. The older theologians seem, like the Greek and Roman moralists, when writing systematically,

CHAP. IV.

to have made general morality their subject, and casuistry but their illustration. Among the monuments of their ethical philosophy, the Secunda Secundæ of Aquinas is the most celebrated. Treatises however of casuistry, which is the expansion and application of ethics, may be found both before and during the sixteenth century; and while the confessional was actively converted to so powerful an engine, they could not conveniently be wanting. Casuistry indeed is not much required by the church in an ignorant age; but the sixteenth century was not an age of ignorance. Yet it is not till about the end of that period that we find casuistical literature burst out, so to speak, with a profusion of fruit. "Uninterruptedly afterwards," says Eichhorn, "through the whole seventeenth century, the moral and casuistical literature of the church of Rome was immensely rich; and it caused a lively and extensive movement in a province which had long been at peace. The first impulse came from the Jesuits, to whom the Jansenists opposed themselves. We must distinguish from both the theological moralists, who remained faithful to their ancient teaching." *

Distraction of subjective and objective morality.

5. We may be blamed, perhaps, for obtruding a pedantic terminology, if we make the most essential distinction in morality, and one for want of which, more than any other, its debateable controversies have arisen, that between the subjective and objective rectitude of actions; in clearer language, between the provinces of conscience and of reason,

* Geschichte der Cultur, vol. vi. part i. p. 390.

between what is well meant, and what is well done. The chief business of the priest is naturally with the former. The walls of the confessional are privy to the whispers of self-accusing guilt. No doubt can ever arise as to the subjective character of actions which the conscience has condemned, and for which the penitent seeks absolution. Were they even objectively lawful, they are sins in him, according to the unanimous determination of casuists. But though what the conscience reclaims against is necessarily wrong, relatively to the agent, it does not follow that what it may fail to disapprove is innocent. Chuse whatever theory we may please as to the moral standard of actions, they must have an objective rectitude of their own, independently of their agent, without which there could be no distinction of right and wrong, or any scope for the dictates of conscience. The science of ethics, as a science, can only be conversant with objective morality. Casuistry is the instrument of applying this science, which, like every other, is built on reasoning, to the moral nature and volition of man. It rests for its validity on the great principle, that it is our duty to know, as far as lies in us, what is right, as well as to do what we know to be such. But its application was beset with obstacles; the extenuations of ignorance and error were so various, the difficulty of representing the moral position of the penitent to the judgment of the confessor by any process of language so insuperable, that the most acute understanding might be foiled in the task of bringing home a conviction of guilt to the self-deceiving sinner. Again, he might aggravate

CHAP. IV.

needless scruples, or disturb the tranquil repose of innocence.

Directory office of the confessor.

6. But though past actions are the primary subject of auricular confession, it was a necessary consequence that the priest would be frequently called upon to advise as to the future, to bind or loose the will in incomplete or meditated lines of conduct. And as all without exception must come before his tribunal, the rich, the noble, the councellors of princes, and princes themselves, were to reveal their designs, to expound their uncertainties, to call, in effect, for his sanction in all they might have to do, to secure themselves against transgression by shifting the responsibility on his head. That this tremendous authority of direction, distinct from the rite of penance, though immediately springing from it, should have produced a no more overwhelming influence of the priesthood than it has actually done, great as that has been, can only be ascribed to the re-action of human inclinations which will not be controuled, and of human reason which exerts a silent force against the authority it acknowledges.

Difficulties of casuistry.

7. In the directory business of the confessional, far more than in the penitential, the priest must strive to bring about that union between subjective and objective rectitude in which the perfection of a moral act consists, without which in every instance, according to their tenets, some degree of sinfulness, some liability to punishment remains, and which must at least be demanded from those who have been made acquainted with their duty. But when he came from the broad lines of the

moral law, from the decalogue and the Gospel, or even from the ethical systems of theology, to the indescribable variety of circumstance which his penitents had to recount, there arose a multitude of problems, and such as perhaps would most command his attention, when they involved the practice of the great, to which he might hesitate to apply an unbending rule. The questions of casuistry, like those of jurisprudence, were often found to turn on the great and ancient doubt of both sciences, whether we should abide by the letter of a general law, or let in an equitable interpretation of its spirit. The consulting party would be apt to plead for the one; the guide of conscience would more securely adhere to the other. But he might also perceive the severity of those rules of obligation which conduce, in the particular instance, to no apparent end, or even defeat their own principle. Hence there arose two schools of casuistry, first in the practice of confession, and afterwards in the books intended to assist it, one strict and uncomplying, the other more indulgent and flexible to circumstances.

Strict and lax schemes of it.

8. The characteristics of these systems were displayed in almost the whole range of morals. They were however chiefly seen in the rules of veracity and especially in promissory obligations. According to the fathers of the church, and to the rigid casuists in general, a lie was never to be uttered, a promise was never to be broken. The precepts especially of revelation, notwithstanding their brevity and figurativeness, were held complete and literal. Hence promises obtained by

CHAP. IV.

mistake, fraud or force, and above all, gratuitous vows, where God was considered as the promisee, however lightly made, or become intolerably onerous by supervenient circumstances, were strictly to be fulfilled, unless the dispensing power of the church might sometimes be sufficient to release them. Besides the respect due to moral rules, and especially those of Scripture, there had been from early times in the Christian church a strong disposition to the ascetic scheme of religious morality; a prevalent notion of the intrinsic meritoriousness of voluntary self-denial, which discountenanced all regard in man to his own happiness, at least in this life, as a sort of flinching from the discipline of suffering. And this had doubtless its influence upon the severe casuists.

Convenience of the latter.

9. But there had not been wanting those, who, whatever course they might pursue in the confessional, found the convenience of an accommodating morality in the secular affairs of the church. Oaths were broken, engagements entered into without faith, for the ends of the clergy, or of those whom they favoured in the struggles of the world. And some of the ingenious sophistry, by which these breaches of plain rules are usually defended, was not unknown before the Reformation. But casuistical writings at that time were comparatively few. The Jesuits have the credit of first rendering public a scheme of false morals, which has been denominated from them, and enhanced the obloquy that overwhelmed their order. Their volumes of casuistry were

exceedingly numerous; some of them belong to the last twenty years of the sixteenth, but a far greater part to the following century.

CHAP. IV.

Favoured by the Jesuits.

10. The Jesuits were prone for several reasons to embrace the laxer theories of obligation. They were less tainted than the old monastic orders with that superstition which had flowed into the church from the east, the meritoriousness of self-inflicted suffering for its own sake. They embraced a life of toil and danger, but not of habitual privation and pain. Dauntless in death and torture, they shunned the mechanical asceticism of the convent. And, secondly, their eyes were bent on a great end, the good of the Catholic church, which they identified with that of their own order. It almost invariably happens, that men who have the good of mankind at heart, and actively prosecute it, become embarrassed, at some time or other, by the conflict of particular duties with the best method of promoting their object. An unaccommodating veracity, an unswerving good faith, will often appear to stand, or stand really, in the way of their ends; and hence the little confidence we repose in enthusiasts, even when, in a popular mode of speaking, they are most sincere; that is, most convinced of the rectitude of their aim.

The causes of this.

11. The course prescribed by Loyola led his disciples not to solitude, but to the world. They became the associates and counsellors, as well as the confessors of the great. They had to wield the powers of the earth for the service of heaven. Hence, in confession itself, they were often tempted

CHAP. IV.

to look beyond the penitent, and to guide his conscience rather with a view to his usefulness than his integrity. In questions of morality, to abstain from action is generally the means of innocence, but to act is indispensable for positive good. Thus their casuistry had a natural tendency to become more objective, and to entangle the responsibility of personal conscience in an inextricable maze of reasoning. They had also to retain their influence over men not wholly submissive to religious control, nor ready to abjure the pleasant paths in which they trod; men of the court and the city, who might serve the church though they did not adorn it, and for whom it was necessary to make some compromise in furtherance of the main design.

Extravagance of the strict casuists.

12. It must also be fairly admitted, that the rigid casuists went to extravagant lengths. Their decisions were often not only harsh, but unsatisfactory; the reason demanded in vain a principle of their iron law; and the common sense of mankind imposed the limitations, which they were incapable of excluding by any thing better than a dogmatic assertion. Thus, in the cases of promissory obligation, they were compelled to make some exceptions, and these left it open to rational inquiry whether more might not be found. They diverged unnecessarily, as many thought, from the principles of jurisprudence; for the jurists built their determinations, or professed to do so, on what was just and equitable among men; and though a distinction, frequently very right, was taken between the *forum exterius* and *interius*,

the provinces of jurisprudence and casuistry, yet the latter could not, in these questions of mutual obligation, rest upon wholly different ground from the former.

Opposite faults of Jesuits.

13. The Jesuits, however, fell rapidly into the opposite extreme. Their subtlety in logic, and great ingenuity in devising arguments, were employed in sophisms that undermined the foundations of moral integrity in the heart. They warred with these arms against the conscience which they were bound to protect. The offences of their casuistry, as charged by their adversaries, are very multifarious. One of the most celebrated is the doctrine of equivocation; the innocence of saying that which is true in a sense meant by the speaker, though he is aware that it will be otherwise understood. Another is that of what was called probability; according to which it is lawful, in doubtful problems of morality, to take the course which appears to ourselves least likely to be right, provided any one casuistical writer of good repute has approved it. The multiplicity of books, and want of uniformity in their decisions, made this a broad path for the conscience. In the latter instance, as in many others, the *subjective* nature of moral obligation was lost sight of; and to this the scientific treatment of casuistry inevitably contributed.

14. Productions so little regarded as those of the Jesuitical casuists cannot be dwelt upon. Thomas Sanchez of Cordova is author of a large treatise on matrimony, published in 1592; the best, as far as the canon law is concerned, which

CHAP. IV.

has yet been published. But in the casuistical portion of this work, the most extraordinary indecencies occur, such as have consigned it to general censure.* Some of these, it must be owned, belong to the rite of auricular confession itself, as managed in the church of Rome, though they give scandal by their publication and apparent excess beyond the necessity of the case. The Summa Casuum Conscientiæ of Toletus, a Spanish Jesuit and cardinal, which, though published in 1602, belongs to the sixteenth century, and the casuistical writings of Less, Busenbaum and Escobar may just be here mentioned. The Medulla Casuum Conscientiæ of the second, (Munster 1645) went through fifty-two editions, the Theologia Moralis of the last (Lyon 1646), through forty.† Of the opposition excited by the laxity in moral rules ascribed to the Jesuits, though it began in some manner during this period, we shall have more to say in the next.

Suarez, De Legibus.

15. Suarez of Granada, by far the greatest man in the department of moral philosophy whom the order of Loyola produced in this age, or perhaps in any other, may not improbably have treated of casuistry in some part of his numerous volumes. We shall however gladly leave this subject to bring before the reader a large treatise of Suarez, on the principles of natural law, as well as of all positive jurisprudence. This is entitled, Tractatus de legibus ac Deo legislatore in decem libros distributus, utriusque fori hominibus non minus

* Bayle, art. Sanchez, expatiates on this, and condemns the Jesuit; Catilina Cethegum. The later editions of Sanchez De Matrimonio, are *castigate*.

† Ranke, die Päpste, vol. iii.

utilis, quam necessarius. It might with no great impropriety, perhaps, be placed in any of the three sections of this chapter, relating not only to moral philosophy, but to politics in some degree, and to jurisprudence.

Titles of his ten books.

16. Suarez begins by laying down the position, that all legislative, as well as all paternal, power is derived from God, and that the authority of every law resolves itself into his. For either the law proceeds immediately from God; or, if it be human, it proceeds from man as his vicar and minister. The titles of the ten books of this large treatise are as follows: 1. On the nature of law in general, and on its causes and consequences; 2. On eternal, natural law, and that of nations; 3. On positive human law in itself, considered relatively to human nature, which is also called civil law; 4. On positive ecclesiastical law; 5. On the differences of human laws, and especially of those that are penal, or in the nature of penal; 6. On the interpretation, the alteration, and the abolition of human laws; 7. On unwritten law, which is called custom; 8. On those human laws which are called favourable, or privileges; 9. On the positive divine law of the old dispensations; 10. On the positive divine law of the new dispensation.

Heads of the second book.

17. This is a very comprehensive chart of general law, and entitles Suarez to be accounted such a precursor of Grotius and Puffendorf as occupied most of their ground, especially that of the latter, though he cultivated it in a different manner. His volume is a closely printed folio of

CHAP. IV.

700 pages in double columns. The following heads of chapters in the second book will show the questions in which Suarez dealt, and in some degree his method of stating and conducting them. 1. Whether there be any eternal law, and what is its necessity; 2. On the subject of eternal law, and on the acts it commands; 3. In what act (actus, not actio, a scholastic term as I conceive), the eternal law exists (existit), and whether it be one or many; 4. Whether the eternal law be the cause of other laws, and obligatory through their means; 5. In what natural law consists; 6. Whether natural law be a preceptive divine law; 7. On the subject of natural law, and on its precepts; 8. Whether natural law be one; 9. Whether natural law bind the conscience; 10. Whether natural law obliges not only to the act (actus) but to the mode (modum) of virtue. This obscure question seems to refer to the subjective nature, or motive, of virtuous actions, as appears by the next; 11. Whether natural law obliges us to act from love or charity (ad modum operandi ex caritate); 12. Whether natural law not only prohibits certain actions, but invalidates them when done; 13. Whether the precepts of the law of nature are intrinsically immutable; 14. Whether any human authority can alter or dispense with the natural law; 15. Whether God by his absolute power can dispense with the law of nature; 16. Whether an equitable interpretation can ever be admitted in the law of nature; 17. Whether the law of nature is distinguishable from that of nations; 18. Whether the law of

nations enjoins or forbids any thing; 19. By what means we are to distinguish the law of nature from that of nations; 20. Certain corollaries; and that the law of nations is both just, and also mutable.

Character of such scholastic treatises.

18. These heads may give some slight notion to the reader of the character of the book, as the book itself may serve as a typical instance of that form of theology, of metaphysics, of ethics, of jurisprudence, which occupies the unread and unreadable folios of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, especially those issuing from the church of Rome, and may be styled generally the scholastic method. Two remarkable characteristics strike us in these books, which are sufficiently to be judged by reading their table of contents, and by taking occasional samples of different parts. The extremely systematic form they assume, and the multiplicity of divisions render this practice more satisfactory than it can be in works of less regular arrangement. One of these characteristics is that spirit of system itself, and another is their sincere desire to exhaust the subject by presenting it to the mind in every light, and by tracing all its relations and consequences. The fertility of those men who, like Suarez, superior to most of the rest, were trained in the scholastic discipline, to which I refer the methods of the canonists and casuists, is sometimes surprising; their views are not one-sided; they may not solve objections to our satisfaction, but they seldom suppress them; they embrace a vast compass of thought and learning; they write less for the moment, and are

CHAP. IV.

less under the influence of local and temporary prejudices than many who have lived in better ages of philosophy. But, again, they have great defects; their distinctions confuse instead of giving light; their systems being not founded on clear principles become embarrassed and incoherent; their method is not always sufficiently consecutive; the difficulties which they encounter are too arduous for them; they labour under the multitude, and are entangled by the discordance, of their authorities.

Quotations of Suarez.

19. Suarez, who discusses all these important problems of his second book with acuteness, and, for his circumstances, with an independent mind, is weighed down by the extent and nature of his learning. If Grotius quotes philosophers and poets too frequently, what can we say of the perpetual reference to Aquinas, Cajetan, Soto, Turrecremata, Vasquius, Isidore, Vincent of Beauvais or Alensis, not to mention the canonists and fathers, which Suarez employs to prove or disprove every proposition. The syllogistic forms are unsparingly introduced. Such writers as Soto or Suarez held all sort of ornament not less unfit for philosophical argument than it would be for geometry. Nor do they ever appeal to experience or history for the rules of determination. Their materials are nevertheless abundant, consisting of texts of Scripture, sayings of the fathers and schoolmen, established theorems in natural theology and metaphysics, from which they did not find it hard to select premises which, duly arranged, gave them conclusions.

His definition of eternal law.

20. Suarez, after a prolix discussion, comes to the conclusion, that "eternal law is the free determination of the will of God, ordaining a rule to be observed, either, first, generally by all parts of the universe as a means of a common good, whether immediately belonging to it in respect of the entire universe, or at least in respect of the singular parts thereof; or, secondly, to be specially observed by intellectual creatures in respect of their free operations."* This is not instantly perspicuous; but definitions of a complex nature cannot be rendered such, and I do not know that it perplexes more at first sight than the enunciation of the last proposition in the fifth book of Simson's Euclid, or many others in the conic sections and other parts of geometry. It is, however, what the reader may think curious, that this crabbed piece of scholasticism is nothing else, in substance, than the celebrated sentence on law, which concludes the first book of Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity. Whoever takes the pains to understand Suarez, will perceive that he asserts exactly that which is unrolled in the majestic eloquence of our countryman.

21. By this eternal law God is not necessarily bound. But this seems to be said rather for the sake of avoiding phrases which were conventionally rejected by the scholastic theologians, since, in

* Legem æternam esse decretum liberum voluntatis Dei statuentis ordinem servandum, aut generaliter ab omnibus partibus universi in ordine ad commune bonum, vel immediatè illi conveniens ratione totius universi, vel saltem ratione singularum specierum ejus, aut specialiter servandum a creaturis intellectualibus quoad liberas operationes earum, c. 3. § 6. Compare with Hooker: Of Law no less can be said than that her throne is the bosom of God, &c.

effect, his theory requires the affirmative, as we shall soon perceive; and he here says that the law is God himself (Deus ipse), and is immutable. This eternal law is not immediately known to man in this life, but either "in other laws, or through them," which he thus explains. "Men, while pilgrims here, (viatores homines), cannot learn the divine will in itself, but only as much as by certain signs or effects is proposed to them; and hence it is peculiar to the blessed in heaven that, contemplating the divine will, they are ruled by it as by a direct law. The former know the eternal law, because they partake of it by other laws, temporal and positive; for, as second causes display the first, and creatures the Creator, so temporal laws, (by which he means laws respective of man on earth,) being streams from that eternal law, manifest the fountain whence they spring. Yet all do not arrive even at this degree of knowledge, for all are not able to infer the cause from the effect. And thus, though all men necessarily perceive some participation of the eternal laws in themselves, since there is no one endowed with reason who does not in some manner acknowledge that what is morally good ought to be chosen, and what is evil rejected, so that in this sense men have all some notion of the eternal law, as St. Thomas, and Hales, and Augustin say; yet nevertheless they do not all know it formally, nor are aware of their participation of it, so that it may be said the eternal law is not universally known in a direct manner. But some attain that knowledge, either by natural reasoning, or more properly by revelation of faith; and hence we have said that

it is known by some only in the inferior laws, but by others through the means of those laws."*

Whether God is a legislator?

22. In every chapter Suarez propounds the arguments of doctors on either side of the problem, ending with his own determination, which is frequently a middle course. On the question, Whether natural law is of itself preceptive, or merely indicative of what is intrinsically right or wrong, or, in other words, whether God, as to this law, is a legislator, he holds this line with Aquinas and most theologians, (as he says;) contending that natural law does not merely indicate right and wrong, but commands the one and prohibits the other; though this will of God is not the whole ground of the moral good and evil which belongs to the observance or transgression of natural law, inasmuch as it presupposes a certain intrinsic right and wrong in the actions themselves, to which it superadds the special obligation of a divine law. God therefore may be truly called a legislator in respect of natural law.†

Whether God could permit or commend wrong actions?

23. He next comes to a profound but important inquiry, Whether God could have permitted by his own law actions against natural reason? Ockham and Gerson had resolved this in the affirmative, Aquinas the contrary way. Suarez assents to the latter, and thus determines that the law is strictly immutable. It must follow of course that the pope cannot alter or dispense with the law of nature,

* Lib. ii. c. 4. § 9.

† Hæc Dei voluntas, prohibitio aut præceptio non est tota ratio bonitatis et malitiæ quæ est in observatione vel transgressione legis naturalis, sed supponit in ipsis actubus necessariam quandam honestatem vel turpitudinem, et illis adjungit specialem legis divinæ obligationem, c. 6. § 11.

CHAP. IV.

and he might have spared the fourteenth chapter, wherein he controverts the doctrine of Sanchez and some casuists who had maintained so extraordinary a prerogative.* This however is rather episodical. In the fifteenth chapter he treats more at length the question, Whether God can dispense with the law of nature? which is not, perhaps, at least according to the notions of many, decided in denying his power to repeal it. He begins by distinguishing three classes of moral laws. The first are the most general, such as that good is to be done rather than evil; and with these it is agreed that God cannot dispense. The second is of such as the precepts of the decalogue, where the chief difficulty had arisen. Ockham, Peter d'Ailly, Gerson, and others, incline to say that he can dispense with all these, inasmuch as they are only prohibitions which he has himself imposed. These were the heads of the nominalist party; and their opinion might be connected, though not necessarily, with the denial of the *reality* of mixed modes. This tenet, Suarez observes, is rejected by all other theologians as false and absurd. He decidedly holds that there is an intrinsic goodness or malignity in actions independent of the command of God. Scotus had been of opinion that God might dispense with the commandments of the second table, but not those of the first. Durand seems to have thought the fifth commandment (our sixth) more dispensable than the rest, probably on account of

* Nulla potestas humana, etiamsi pontificia sit, potest proprium aliquod præceptum legis naturalis abrogare, nec illud proprie et in se minuere, neque in ipso dispensare. § 8.

the case of Abraham. But Aquinas, Cajetan, Soto, with many more, deny absolutely the dispensability of the decalogue in any part. The Gordian knot about the sacrifice of Isaac is cut by a distinction, that God did not act here as a legislator, but in another capacity, as lord of life and death, so that he only used Abraham as an instrument for that which he might have done himself. The third class of moral precepts is of those not contained in the decalogue, as to which he decides also that God cannot dispense with them, though he may change the circumstances upon which their obligation rests, as when he releases a vow.

English casuists — Perkins, Hall.

24. The Protestant churches were not generally attentive to casuistical divinity, which smelt too much of the opposite system. Eichhorn observes that the first book of that class, published among the Lutherans, was by a certain Baldwin of Wittenberg, in 1628.* A few books of casuistry were published in England during this period, though nothing, as well as I remember, that can be reckoned a system or even a treatise of moral philosophy. Perkins, an eminent Calvinistic divine of the reign of Elizabeth, is the first of these in point of time. His Cases of Conscience appeared in 1606. Of this book I can say nothing from personal knowledge. In the works of Bishop Hall several particular questions of this kind are treated, but not with much ability. His distinctions are more than usually feeble. Thus usury is a deadly sin, but it is very difficult to commit

* Vol. vi. part i. p. 346.

CHAP. IV.

it unless we love the sin for its own sake; for almost every possible case of lending money will be found by his limitations of the rule to justify the taking a profit for the loan.* His casuistry about selling goods is of the same description: a man must take no advantage of the scarcity of the commodity, unless there should be just reason to raise the price, which he admits to be often the case in a scarcity. He concludes by observing that, in this, as in other well ordered nations, it would be a happy thing to have a regulation of prices. He decides, as all the old casuists did, that a promise extorted by a robber is binding. Sanderson was the most celebrated of the English casuists. His treatise, De Juramenti Obligatione, appeared in 1647.

Selden, De Jure Naturali juxta Hebræos.

25. Though no proper treatise of moral philosophy came from any English writer in this period, we have one which must be placed in this class, strangely as the subject has been handled by its distinguished author. Selden published in 1640 his learned work, De Jure Naturali et Gentium juxta Disciplinam Ebræorum.† The object of the author was to trace the opinions of the Jews on the law of nature and nations, or of moral obligation, as distinct from the Mosaic law; the former being a law to which they held all mankind to be bound. This theme had been of course untouched by the Greek and Roman philo-

* Hall's Works, (edit. Pratt) vol. viii. p. 375.

† *Juxta* for *secundum*, we need hardly say, is bad Latin: it was however very common, and is even used by Joseph Scaliger, as Vossius mentions in his treatise, De Vitiis Sermonis.

sophers, nor was much to be found upon it in modern writers. His purpose is therefore rather historical than argumentative; but he seems so generally to adopt the Jewish theory of natural law that we may consider him the disciple of the rabbis as much as their historian.

Jewish theory of natural law

26. The origin of natural law was not drawn by the Jews, as some of the jurists imagined it ought to be, from the habits and instincts of all animated beings, quod natura omnia animalia docuit, according to the definition of the Pandects. Nor did they deem, as many have done, the consent of mankind and common customs of nations to be a sufficient basis for so permanent and invariable a standard. Upon the discrepancy of moral sentiments and practices among mankind Selden enlarges in the tone which Sextus Empiricus had taught scholars, and which the world had learned from Montaigne. Nor did unassisted reason seem equal to determine moral questions, both from its natural feebleness, and because reason alone does not create an obligation, which depends wholly on the command of a superior.* But God, as the ruler of the universe, has partly implanted in our minds, partly made known to us by exterior revelation, his own will, which is our law. These positions he illustrates with a superb display of erudition, especially oriental, and certainly with more prolixity, and less regard to opposite reasonings, than we should desire.

* Selden says, in his Table Talk, that he can understand no law of nature but a law of God. He might mean this in the sense of Suarez, without denying an intrinsic distinction of right and wrong.

CHAP. IV.

Seven precepts of the sons of Noah.

27. The Jewish writers concur in maintaining that certain short precepts of moral duty were orally enjoined by God on the parent of mankind, and afterwards on the sons of Noah. Whether these were simply preserved by tradition, or whether, by an innate moral faculty, mankind had the power of constantly discerning them, seems to have been an unsettled point. The principal of these divine rules are called, for distinction, The Seven Precepts of the Sons of Noah. There appears however to be some variance in the lists, as Selden has given them from the ancient writers. That most received consists of seven prohibitions; namely of idolatry, blasphemy, murder, adultery, theft, rebellion, and cutting a limb from a living animal. The last of these, the sense of which, however, is controverted, as well as the third, but no other, are indicated in the ninth chapter of Genesis.

Character of Selden's work.

28. Selden pours forth his unparalleled stores of erudition on all these subjects, and upon those which are suggested in the course of his explanations. These digressions are by no means the least useful part of his long treatise. They elucidate some obscure passages of Scripture. But the whole work belongs far more to theological than to philosophical investigation; and I have placed it here chiefly out of conformity to usage; for undoubtedly Selden, though a man of very strong reasoning faculties, had not greatly turned them to the principles of natural law. His reliance on the testimony of Jewish writers, many of them by no means ancient, for those primæval

traditions as to the sons of Noah, was in the character of his times, but it will scarcely suit the more rigid criticism of our own. His book however is excellent for its proper purpose, that of representing Jewish opinion, and is among the greatest achievements in erudition that any English writer has performed.

Grotius and Hobbes.

29. The moral theories of Grotius and Hobbes are so much interwoven with other parts of their philosophy, in the treatise De Jure Belli and in the Leviathan, that it would be dissecting those works too much, were we to separate what is merely ethical from what falls within the provinces of politics and jurisprudence. The whole must therefore be deferred to the ensuing sections of this chapter. Nor is there much in the writings of Bacon or of Descartes which falls, in the sense we have hitherto been considering it, under the class of moral philosophy. We may therefore proceed to another description of books, relative to the passions and manners of mankind, rather than, in a strict sense, to their duties, though of course there will frequently be some intermixture of subjects so intimately allied.

Charron on Wisdom.

30. In the year 1601, Peter Charron, a French ecclesiastic, published his Treatise on Wisdom. The reputation of this work has been considerable; his countrymen are apt to name him with Montaigne; and Pope has given him the epithet of "more wise" than his predecessor, on account, as Warburton expresses it, of his "moderating every where the extravagant Pyrrhonism of his friend." It is admitted that he has copied freely from the

Essays of Montaigne; in fact, a very large portion of the Treatise on Wisdom, not less, I should conjecture, than one fourth, is extracted from them with scarce any verbal alteration. It is not the case that he moderates the sceptical tone which he found there; on the contrary, the most remarkable passages of that kind have been transcribed; but we must do Charron the justice to say that he has retrenched the indecencies, the egotism, and the superfluities. Charron does not dissemble his debts. "This," he says in his preface, "is the collection of a part of my studies; the form and method are my own. What I have taken from others, I have put in their words, not being able to say it better than they have done." In the political part he has borrowed copiously from Lipsius and Bodin, and he is said to have obligations to Duvair.* The ancients also must have contributed their share. It becomes therefore difficult to estimate the place of Charron as a philosopher, because we feel a good deal of uncertainty whether any passage may be his own. He appears to have been a man formed in the school of Montaigne, not much less bold in pursuing the novel opinions of others, but less fertile in original thoughts, so that he often falls into the common-places of ethics; with more reading than his model, with more disciplined habits as well of arranging and distributing his subject, as of observing the sequence of an argument; but on the other hand with far less of ingenuity in thinking and of sprightliness of language.

* Biogr. Universelle.

La Mothe le Vayer. His Dialogues.

31. A writer of rather less extensive celebrity than Charron belongs full as much to the school of Montaigne, though he does not so much pillage his Essays. This was La Mothe le Vayer, a man distinguished by his literary character in the court of Louis XIII., and ultimately preceptor both to the Duke of Orleans and the young king (Louis XIV.) himself. La Mothe was habitually and universally a sceptic. Among several smaller works we may chiefly instance his Dialogues published many years after his death under the name of Horatius Tubero. They must have been written in the reign of Louis XIII., and belong therefore to the present period. In attacking every established doctrine, especially in religion, he goes much farther than Montaigne, and seems to have taken much of his metaphysical system immediately from Sextus Empiricus. He is profuse of quotation, especially in a dialogue entitled Le Banquet Sceptique, the aim of which is to show that there is no uniform taste of mankind as to their choice of food. His mode of arguing against the moral sense is entirely that of Montaigne, or, if there be any difference, is more full of the two fallacies by which that lively writer deceives himself; namely, the accumulating examples of things arbitrary and fanciful, such as modes of dress and conventional usages, with respect to which no one pretends that any natural law can be found, and, when he comes to subjects more truly moral, the turning our attention solely to the external action, and not to the motive or principle, which under different circumstances may prompt men to opposite courses.

CHAP. IV.

32. These dialogues are not unpleasing to read, and exhibit a polite though rather pedantic style not uncommon in the seventeenth century. They are however very diffuse, and the sceptical paradoxes become merely common-place by repetition. One of them is more grossly indecent than any part of Montaigne. La Mothe le Vayer is not, on the whole, much to be admired as a philosopher; little appears to be his own, and still less is really good. He contributed, no question, as much as any one to the irreligion and contempt for morality prevailing in that court where he was in high reputation. Some other works of this author may be classed under the same description.

Bacon's Essays.

33. We can hardly refer Lord Bacon's Essays to the school of Montaigne, though their title may lead us to suspect that they were in some measure suggested by that most popular writer. The first edition, containing ten essays only, and those much shorter than as we now possess them, appeared, as has been already mentioned, in 1597. They were reprinted with very little variation in 1606. But the enlarged work was published in 1612, and dedicated to Prince Henry. He calls them, in this dedication, "certain brief notes, set down rather significantly than curiously, which I have called Essays. The word is late, but the thing is ancient; for Seneca's Epistles to Lucilius, if you mark them well, are but Essays, that is, dispersed meditations, though conveyed in the form of epistles." The resemblance, at all events, to Montaigne is not greater than might be expected in two men equally original in genius, and entirely opposite in their

characters and circumstances. One by an instinctive felicity, catches some of the characteristics of human nature; the other, by profound reflection, scrutinizes and dissects it. One is too negligent for the inquiring reader, the other too formal and sententious for one who seeks to be amused. We delight in one, we admire the other; but this admiration has also its own delight. In one we find more of the sweet temper and tranquil contemplation of Plutarch, in the other more of the practical wisdom and somewhat ambitious prospects of Seneca. It is characteristic of Bacon's philosophical writings, that they have in them a spirit of movement, a perpetual reference to what man is to do in order to an end, rather than to his mere speculation upon what is. In his Essays, this is naturally still more prominent. They are, as quaintly described in the title-page of the first edition, "places (loci) of persuasion and dissuasion;" counsels for those who would be great as well as wise. They are such as sprang from a mind ardent in two kinds of ambition, and hesitating whether to found a new philosophy, or to direct the vessel of the state. We perceive however that the immediate reward attending greatness, as is almost always the case, gave it a preponderance in his mind; and hence his Essays are more often political than moral; they deal with mankind, not in their general faculties or habits, but in their mutual strife, their endeavours to rule others, or to avoid their rule. He is more cautious and more comprehensive, though not more acute than Machiavel, who often becomes too dogmatic through

CHAP. IV.

the habit of referring every thing to a particular aspect of political societies. Nothing in the Prince or the Discourses on Livy is superior to the Essays on Seditions, on Empire, on Innovations, or generally those which bear on the dexterous management of a people by their rulers. Both these writers have what to our more liberal age appears a counselling of governors for their own rather than their subjects' advantage; but as this is generally represented to be the best means, though not, as it truly is, the real end, their advice tends on the whole to advance the substantial benefits of government.

Their excellence.

34. The transcendent strength of Bacon's mind is visible in the whole tenor of these Essays, unequal as they must be from the very nature of such compositions. They are deeper and more discriminating than any earlier, or almost any later work in the English language, full of recondite observation long matured and carefully sifted. It is true that we might wish for more vivacity and ease; Bacon, who had much wit, had little gaiety; his Essays are consequently stiff and grave, where the subject might have been touched with a lively hand; thus it is in those on Gardens and on Building. The sentences have sometimes too apophthegmatic a form and want coherence; the historical instances, though far less frequent than with Montaigne, have a little the look of pedantry to our eyes. But it is from this condensation, from this gravity, that the work derives its peculiar impressiveness. Few books are more quoted, and what is not always the case with such books,

we may add that few are more generally read. In this respect they lead the van of our prose literature; for no gentleman is ashamed of owning that he has not read the Elizabethan writers; but it would be somewhat derogatory to a man of the slightest claim to polite letters, were he unacquainted with the Essays of Bacon. It is indeed little worth while to read this or any other book for reputation sake; but very few in our language so well repay the pains, or afford more nourishment to the thoughts. They might be judiciously introduced, with a small number more, into a sound method of education, one that should make wisdom, rather than mere knowledge, its object, and might become a text-book of examination in our schools.

Feltham's Resolves.

35. It is rather difficult to fix upon the fittest place for bringing forward some books, which, though moral in their subject, belong to the general literature of the age, and we might strip the province of polite letters of what have been reckoned its chief ornaments. I shall therefore select here such only, as are more worthy of consideration for their matter than for the style in which it is delivered. Several that might range, more or less, under the denomination of moral essays, were published both in English and in other languages. But few of them are now read, or even much known by name. One, which has made a better fortune than the rest, demands mention, the Resolves of Owen Feltham. Of this book, the first part of which was published in 1627, the second not till after the middle of the

CHAP. IV.

century, it is not uncommon to meet with high praises in those modern writers, who profess a faithful allegiance to our older literature. For myself, I can only say that Feltham appears not only a laboured and artificial, but a shallow writer. Among his many faults none strikes me more than a want of depth, which his pointed and sententious manner renders more ridiculous. Sallust, among the ancients, is a great dealer in such oracular truisms, a style of writing that soon becomes disagreeable. There are certainly exceptions to this vacuity of original meaning in Feltham; it would be possible to fill a few pages with extracts not undeserving of being read, with thoughts just and judicious, though never deriving much lustre from his diction. He is one of our worst writers in point of style; with little vigour, he has less elegance; his English is impure to an excessive degree, and full of words unauthorized by any usage. Pedantry, and the novel phrases which Greek and Latin etymology was supposed to warrant, appear in most productions of this period; but Feltham attempted to bend the English idiom to his own affectations. The moral reflections of a serious and thoughtful mind are generally pleasing, and to this perhaps is partly owing the kind of popularity which the Resolves of Feltham have obtained; but they may be had more agreeably and profitably in other books.*

* This is a random sample of Feltham's style: "Of all objects of sorrow a distressed king is the most pitiful, because it presents us most the frailty of humanity, and cannot but most *midnight* the soul of him that is fallen. The sorrows of a deposed king are like the *distorquements* of a *darted* conscience which none can know but he that hath lost a crown." Cent. i. 61. We find not long after the follow-

CHAP. IV.

36. A superior genius to that of Feltham is exhibited in the Religio Medici of Sir Thomas Browne. This little book made a remarkable impression; it was soon translated into several languages, and is highly extolled by Conringius and others, who could only judge through these versions. Patin, though he rather slights it himself, tells us in one of his letters that it was very popular at Paris. The character which Johnson has given of the Religio Medici is well known; and, though perhaps rather too favourable, appears in general just.* The mind of Browne was fertile, and, according to the current use of the word, ingenious: his analogies are original and sometimes brilliant; and as his learning is also of things out of the beaten path, this gives a peculiar and uncommon air to all his writings, and especially to the Religio Medici. He was however far removed from real philosophy, both

ing precious phrase: "The nature that is *arted* with the subtleties of time and practice." I. 63. In one page, we have *obnubilate*, *nested*, *parallel*, (as a verb) *fails* (failings) *uncurtain*, *depraving* (calumniating.) I. 50. And we are to be disgusted with such vile English, or properly no English, for the sake of the sleepy saws of a trivial morality. Such defects are not compensated by the better and more striking thoughts we may occasionally light upon. In reading Feltham, nevertheless, I seemed to perceive some resemblance to the tone and way of thinking of the Turkish Spy, which is a great compliment to the former; for the Turkish Spy is neither disagreeable nor superficial. The resemblance must lie in a certain contemplative melancholy, rather serious than severe, in respect to the world and its ways; and as Feltham's Resolves seem to have a charm, by the editions they have gone through, and the good name they have gained, I can only look for it in this.

* "The Religio Medici was no sooner published than it excited the attention of the public by the novelty of paradoxes, the dignity of sentiment, the quick succession of images, the multitude of abstruse allusions, the subtlety of disquisition, and the strength of language." Life of Browne, (in Johnson's Works, xii. 275).

CHAP. IV.

by his turn of mind and by the nature of his erudition; he seldom reasons, his thoughts are desultory, sometimes he appears sceptical or paradoxical, but credulity and deference to authority prevail. He belonged to the class, numerous at that time in our church, who halted between popery and protestantism; and this gives him, on all such topics, an appearance of vacillation and irresoluteness which probably represents the real state of his mind. His paradoxes do not seem very original, nor does he arrive at them by any process of argument; they are more like traces of his reading casually suggesting themselves, and supported by his own ingenuity. His style is not flowing, but vigorous; his choice of words not elegant, and even approaching to barbarism as English phrase; yet there is an impressiveness, an air of reflection and sincerity in Browne's writings, which redeem many of their faults. His egotism is equal to that of Montaigne, but with this difference, that it is the egotism of a melancholy mind, which generally becomes unpleasing. This melancholy temperament is characteristic of Browne. "Let's talk of graves and tombs and epitaphs" seems his motto. His best written work, the Hydriotaphia, is expressly an essay on sepulchral urns; but the same taste for the circumstances of mortality leavens also the Religio Medici.

Selden's Table Talk.

37. The thoughts of Sir Walter Raleigh on moral prudence are few, but precious. And some of the bright sallies of Selden recorded in his Table Talk are of the same description, though

the book is too miscellaneous to fall under any single head of classification. The editor of this very short and small volume, which gives, perhaps, a more exalted notion of Selden's natural talents than any of his learned writings, requests the reader to distinguish times, and "in his fancy to carry along with him the when and the why many of these things were spoken." This intimation accounts for the different spirit in which he may seem to combat the follies of the prelates at one time, and of the presbyterians or fanatics at another. These sayings are not always, apparently, well-reported; some seem to have been misunderstood, and in others the limiting clauses to have been forgotten. But on the whole they are full of vigour, raciness, and a kind of scorn of the half-learned, far less rude, but more cutting than that of Scaliger. It has been said that the Table Talk of Selden is worth all the Ana of the continent. In this I should be disposed to concur; but they are not exactly works of the same class.

Osborn's Advice to his Son.

38. We must now descend much lower, and could find little worth remembering. Osborn's Advice to his Son may be reckoned among the moral and political writings of this period. It is not very far above mediocrity, and contains a good deal that is common-place, yet with a considerable sprinkling of sound sense and observation. The style is rather apophthegmatic, though by no means more so than was then usual.

John Valentine Andreæ.

39. A few books, English as well as foreign, are purposely deferred for the present; I am

CHAP. IV.

rather apprehensive that I shall be found to have overlooked some not unworthy of notice. One written in Latin by a German writer has struck me as displaying a spirit which may claim for it a place among the livelier and lighter class, though with serious intent, of moral essays. John Valentine Andreæ was a man above his age, and a singular contrast to the narrow and pedantic herd of German scholars and theologians. He regarded all things around him with a sarcastic but benevolent philosophy, keen in exposing the errors of mankind, yet only for the sake of amending them. It has been supposed by many that he invented the existence of the famous Rosicrucian society, not so much, probably, for the sake of mystification, as to suggest an institution so praiseworthy and philanthropic as he delineated for the imitation of mankind. This however is still a debated problem in Germany.* But among his numerous writings, that alone of which I know anything is intitled in the original Latin, Mythologiæ Christianæ, sive Virtutum et Vitiorum Vitæ Humanæ Imaginum Libri Tres. (Strasburg, 1618.) Herder has translated a part of this book in the fifth volume of his Zerstreute Blätter; and it is here that I have met with it. Andreæ wrote, I believe, solely in Latin, and his works appear to be scarce, at least in England. These short apologues, which Herder has called Parables, are written with uncommon terseness of language, a happy and original vein of invention, and

* Brucker, iv. 735. Biogr. Univ. art. Andreæ, et alibi.

a philosophy looking down on common life without ostentation and without passion. He came too before Bacon, but he had learned to scorn the disputes of the schools, and had sought for truth with an entire love, even at the hands of Cardan and Campanella. I will give a specimen, in a note, of the peculiar manner of Andreæ, but my translation does not, perhaps, justice to that of Herder. The idea, it may be observed, is now become more trite.*

* "The Pen and the Sword strove with each other for superiority, and the voices of the judges were divided. The men of learning talked much and persuaded many; the men of arms were fierce and compelled many to join their side. Thus nothing could be determined; it followed that both were left to fight it out, and settle their dispute in single combat.

"On one side books rustled in the libraries, on the other arms rattled in the arsenals; men looked on in hope and fear, and waited the end.

"The Pen, consecrated to truth, was notorious for much falsehood; the Sword, a servant of God, was stained with innocent blood; both hoped for the aid of heaven, both found its wrath.

"The State, which had need of both, and disliked the manners of both, would put on the appearance of caring for the weal and wo of neither. The Pen was weak, but quick, glib, well exercised, and very bold, when one provoked it. The Sword was stern, implacable, but less compact and subtle, so that on both sides the victory remained uncertain. At length for the security of both, the common weal pronounced that both in turn should stand by her side and bear with each other. For that only is a happy country where the Pen and the Sword are faithful servants, not where either governs by its arbitrary will and passion."

If the touches in this little piece are not always clearly laid on, it may be ascribed as much, perhaps, to their having passed through two translations, as to the fault of the excellent writer. But in this early age we seldom find the entire neatness and felicity which later times attained.

Sect. II.

ON POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY.

Change in the Character of political Writings. — Bellenden and others. — Patriarchal Theory refuted by Suarez. — Althusius. — Political Economy of Serra. — Hobbes, — and Analysis of his political Treatises.

40. The recluse philosopher, who, like Descartes in his country-house near Utrecht, investigates the properties of quantity, or the operations of the human mind, while nations are striving for conquest and factions for ascendancy, hears that tumultuous uproar but as the dash of the ocean waves at a distance, and it may even serve, like music that falls upon the poet's ear, to wake in him some new train of high thought, or at the least to confirm his love of the absolute and the eternal, by comparison with the imperfection and error that besets the world. Such is the serene temple of philosophy, which the Roman poet has contrasted with the storm and the battle, with the passions of the great and the many, the perpetual struggle of man against his fellows. But if he who might dwell on this vantage-ground descends into the plain, and takes so near a view of the world's strife, that he sees it as a whole very imperfectly, while the parts to which he approaches are magnified beyond their proportion, if especially he mingles with the combat, and shares its hopes and its perils, though in many respects he may know more than those who keep aloof, he will lose something of that faculty of equal and comprehensive vision, in which the philosophical

temper consists. Such has very frequently, or more or less, perhaps, in almost every instance, been the fate of the writer on general politics; if his pen has not been solely employed with a view to the questions that engage attention in his own age, it has generally been guided in a certain degree by regard to them.

Abandonment of anti-monarchical theories.

41. In the sixteenth century, we have seen that notions of popular rights, and of the amissibility of sovereign power for misconduct, were alternately broached by the two great religious parties of Europe, according to the necessity in which they stood for such weapons against their adversaries. Passive obedience was preached as a duty by the victorious, rebellion was claimed as a right by the vanquished. The history of France and England, and partly of other countries, was the clue to these politics. But in the following period, a more tranquil state of public opinion, and a firmer hand upon the reins of power, put an end to such books as those of Languet, Buchanan, Rose and Mariana. The last of these, by the vindication of tyrannicide in his treatise De Rege, contributed to bring about a re-action in political literature. The Jesuits in France, whom Henry IV. was inclined to favour, publicly condemned the doctrine of Mariana in 1606. A book by Becanus, and another by Suarez, justifying regicide, were condemned by the parliament of Paris, in 1612.* The assassination indeed of Henry IV., committed by one, not perhaps, metaphysically speaking, sane, but whose aberration of intellect had evidently

* Mezeray, Hist. de la Mère et du Fils.

CHAP. IV.

been either brought on or nourished by the pernicious theories of that school, created such an abhorrence of the doctrine, that neither the Jesuits nor others ventured afterwards to teach it. Those also who magnified, as far as circumstances would permit, the alleged supremacy of the See of Rome over temporal princes, were little inclined to set up, like Mariana, a popular sovereignty, a right of the multitude not emanating from the Church, and to which the Church itself might one day be under the necessity of submitting. This became therefore a period favourable to the theories of absolute power; not so much shown by means of their positive assertion through the press as by the silence of the press, comparatively speaking, on all political theories whatever.

Political literature becomes historical.

42. The political writings of this part of the seventeenth century assumed in consequence more of an historical or, as we might say, a statistical character. Learning was employed in systematic analyses of ancient or modern forms of government, in dissertations explanatory of institutions, in copious and exact statements of the true, rather than arguments upon the right or the expedient. Some of the very numerous works of Herman Conringius, a professor at Helmstadt, seem to fall within this description. But none are better known than a collection, made by the Elzevirs, at different times near the middle of this century, containing accounts, chiefly published before, of the political constitutions of European commonwealths. This collection, which is in volumes of the smallest size,

may be called for distinction the Elzevir Republics. It is very useful in respect of the knowledge of facts it imparts, but rarely contains anything of a philosophical nature. Statistical descriptions of countries are much allied to these last; some indeed are included in the Elzevir series. They were as yet not frequent; but I might have mentioned in the last volume one of the earliest, the Description of the Low Countries by Ludovico Guicciardini, brother of the historian. CHAP. IV.

Bellenden de Statu.

43. Those however were not entirely wanting who took a more philosophical view of the social relations of mankind. Among these a very respectable place should be assigned to a Scotsman, by name Bellenden, whose treatise De Statu, in three books, is dedicated to Prince Charles in 1615. The first of these books is entitled De Statu prisci orbis in religione, re politica et literis; the second, Ciceronis Princeps, sive de statu principis et imperii; the third, Ciceronis Consul, Senator, Senatusque Romanus, sive de statu reipublicæ et urbis imperantis orbi. The first two books are, in a general sense, political; the last relates entirely to the Roman polity, but builds much political precept on this. Bellenden seems to have taken a more comprehensive view of history in his first book, and to have reflected more philosophically on it, than perhaps any one had done before; at least I do not remember any work of so early an age which reminds me so much of Vico and the Grandeur et Decadence of Montesquieu. We can hardly make an exception for Bodin, because the Scot is so much more regularly historical, and so

CHAP. IV.

much more concise. The first book contains little more than forty pages. Bellenden's learning is considerable and without that pedantry of quotation which makes most books of the age intolerable. The latter parts have less originality and reach of thought. This book was re-printed, as is well known, in 1787; but the celebrated preface of the editor has had the effect of eclipsing the original author; Parr was constantly read and talked of, Bellenden never.

Campanella's Politics.

44. The Politics of Campanella are warped by a desire to please the court of Rome, which he recommends as fit to enjoy an universal monarchy, at least by supreme control; and observes with some acuteness, that no prince had been able to obtain an universal ascendant over Christendom, because the presiding vigilance of the Holy See has regulated their mutual contentions, exalting one and depressing another, as seemed expedient for the good of religion.* This book is pregnant with deep reflection on history, it is enriched, perhaps, by the study of Bodin, but is much more concise. In one of the Dialogues of La Mothe le Vayer, we find the fallacy of some general maxims in politics drawn from a partial induction well exposed, by showing the instances where they have wholly failed. Though he pays high compliments to Louis XIII. and to Richelieu, he speaks freely enough, in his sceptical way, of the general advantages of monarchy.

La Mothe le Vayer.

* Nullus hactenus Christianus princeps monarchiam super cunctos Christianos populos sibi conservare potuit. Quoniam papa præest illis, et dissipat erigitque illorum conatus prout religioni expedit. C. 8.

CHAP. IV.

Naudé's Coups d'Etat.

45. Gabriel Naudé, a man of extensive learning, acute understanding, and many good qualities, but rather lax in religious and moral principle, excited some attention by a very small volume, entitled Considerations sur les coups d'état, which he wrote while young, at Rome, in the service of the Cardinal de Bagne. In this he maintains the bold contempt of justice and humanity in political emergencies which had brought disgrace on the Prince of Machiavel, blaming those who, in his own country, had abandoned the defence of the St. Bartholomew massacre. The book is in general heavy and not well written, but coming from a man of cool head, clear judgment and considerable historical knowledge, it contains some remarks not unworthy of notice.

Patriarchal theory of government.

46. The ancient philosophers, the civil lawyers, and by far the majority of later writers had derived the origin of government from some agreement, or tacit consent, of the community. Bodin, explicitly rejecting this hypothesis, referred it to violent usurpation. But, in England, about the beginning of the reign of James, a different theory gained ground with the church; it was assumed, for it did not admit of proof, that a patriarchal authority had been transferred by primogeniture to the heir-general of the human race; so that kingdoms were but enlarged families, and an indefeasible right of monarchy was attached to their natural chief, which, in consequence of the impossibility of discovering him, devolved upon the representative of the first sovereign who could be historically proved to have reigned over any nation.

CHAP. IV.

This had not perhaps hitherto been maintained at length in any published book, but will be found to have been taken for granted in more than one. It was of course in favour with James I., who had a very strong hereditary title; and it might seem to be countenanced by the fact of Highland and Irish clanship, which does really affect to rest on a patriarchal basis.

Refuted by Suarez.

47. This theory as to the origin of political society, or one akin to it, appears to have been espoused by some on the Continent. Suarez, in the second book of his great work on law, observes in a remarkable passage, that certain canonists hold civil magistracy to have been conferred by God on some prince, and to remain always in his heirs by succession; but "that such an opinion has neither authority nor foundation. For this power, by its very nature, belongs to no one man, but to a multitude of men. This is a certain conclusion, being common to all our authorities, as we find by St. Thomas, by the civil laws, and by the great canonists and casuists; all of whom agree that the prince has that power of law-giving which the people have given him. And the reason is evident, since all men are born equal, and consequently no one has a political jurisdiction over another, nor any dominion; nor can we give any reason from the nature of the thing, why one man should govern another rather than the contrary. It is true that one might alledge the primacy which Adam at his creation necessarily possessed, and hence deduce his government over all men, and suppose that to be derived by some one, either

through primogenitary descent, or through the special appointment of Adam himself. Thus Chrysostom has said that the descent of all men from Adam signifies their subordination to one sovereign. But in fact we could only infer from the creation and natural origin of mankind that Adam possessed a domestic or patriarchal (œconomicam), not a political authority; for he had power over his wife, and afterwards a paternal power over his sons till they were emancipated; and he might even in course of time have servants and a complete family, and that power in respect of them which is called patriarchal. But after families began to be multiplied, and single men who were heads of families to be separated, they had each the same power with respect to their own families. Nor did political power begin to exist till many families began to be collected into one entire community. Hence, as that community did not begin by Adam's creation, nor by any will of his, but by that of all who formed it, we cannot properly say, that Adam had naturally a political headship in such a society; for there are no principles of reason from which this could be inferred, since by the law of nature it is no right of the progenitor to be even king of his own posterity. And if this cannot be proved by the principles of natural law, we have no ground for asserting that God has given such a power by a special gift or providence, inasmuch as we have no revelation or scripture testimony to the purpose."* So clear, brief and

* Lib. ii. c. 2. § 3.

CHAP. IV.

dispassionate a refutation might have caused our English divines, who became very fond of this patriarchal theory, to blush before the Jesuit of Granada.

His opinion of law.

48. Suarez maintains it to be of the essence of a law that it be exacted for the public good. An unjust law is no law, and does not bind the conscience.* In this he breathes the spirit of Mariana. But he shuns some of his bolder assertions. He denies the right of rising in arms against a tyrant, unless he is an usurper; and though he is strongly for preserving the concession made by the kings of Spain to their people, that no taxes shall be levied without the consent of the Cortes, does not agree with those who lay it down as a general rule, that no prince can impose taxes on his people by his own will.† Suarez asserts the direct power of the church over heretical princes, but denies it as to infidels.‡ In this last point, as has been seen, he follows the most respectable authorities of his nation.

49. Bayle has taken notice of a systematic treatise on Politics by John Althusius, a native of Germany. Of this I have only seen an edition published at Groningen in 1615, and dedicated to the states of West Friesland. It seems however from the article in Bayle, that there was one printed at Herborn in 1603. Several German writers inveigh against this work as full of seditious principles, inimical to every government. It is a political system, taken chiefly from preceding

* Lib. i. c. 7.; and lib. iii. c. 22. † Lib. v. c. 17.
‡ Lib. iii. c. 10.

authors, and very freely from Bodin; with great learning, but not very profitable to read. The ephori, as he calls them, by which he means the estates of a kingdom, have the right to resist a tyrant. But this right he denies to the private citizen. His chapter on this subject is written more in the tone of the sixteenth than of the seventeenth century, which indeed had scarcely commenced.* He answers in it Albericus Gentilis, Barclay and others who had contended for passive obedience, not failing to draw support from the canonists and civilians whom he quotes. But the strongest passage is in his dedication to the States of Friesland. Here he declares his principle, that the supreme power or sovereignty, (jus majestatis) does not reside in the chief magistrate, but in the people themselves, and that no other is proprietor or usufructuary of it, the magistrate being the administrator of this supreme power, but not its owner, nor entitled to use it for his benefit. And these rights of sovereignty are so much confined to the whole community, that they can no more alienate them to another, whether they will or not, than a man can transfer his own life.†

50. Few, even among the Calvinists, whose form of government was in some cases republican, would in the seventeenth century have approved this strong language of Althusius. But one of their

* Cap. 38. De tyrannide et ejus remediis.

† Administratorem, procuratorem, gubernatorem jurium majestatis, principem agnosco. Proprietarium vero et usufructuarium majestatis nullum alium quam populum universum in corpus unum symbioticum ex pluribus minoribus consociationibus consociatum, &c.

CHAP. IV.

noted theologians, Paræus, incurred the censure of the university of Oxford in 1623, for some passages in his commentary on the Epistle to the Romans which seemed to impugn their orthodox tenet of unlimited submission. He merely holds that subjects, when not private men, but inferior magistrates, may defend themselves and the state and the true religion even by arms against the sovereign under certain conditions; because these superior magistrates are themselves responsible to the laws of God and of the state.* It was, in truth, impossible to deny the right of resistance in such cases without "branding the unsmirched brow" of protestantism itself; for by what other means had the reformed religion been made to flourish in Holland and Geneva or in Scotland? But in England, where it had been planted under a more auspicious star, there was little occasion to seek this vindication of the protestant church, which had not, in the legal phrase, come in by disseisin of the state, but had united with the state to turn out of doors its predecessor. That the Anglican refugees under Mary were ripe enough for resistance, or even regicide, has been seen in the last volume by an extract from one of their most distinguished prelates.

* Subditi non privati, sed in magistratu inferiori constituti adversus superiorem magistratum se et rempublicam et ecclesiam seu veram religionem etiam armis defendere jure possunt, his positis conditionibus: 1. Cum superior magistratus degenerat in tyrannum; 2. Aut ad manifestam idololatriam atque blasphemias ipsos vel subditos alios vult cogere; 3. Cum ipsis atrox infertur injuria; 4. Si aliter incolumes fortunis vita et conscientia esse non possint; 5. Ne prætextu religionis aut justitiæ sua quærant; 6. Servata semper ἐπιεικείᾳ et moderamine inculpatæ tutelæ juxta leges. Paræus in Epist. ad Roman. col. 1350.



CHAP. IV.

Bacon.

51. Bacon ought to appear as a prominent name in political philosophy, if we had never met with it in any other. But we have anticipated much of his praise on this score; and it is sufficient to repeat generally that on such subjects he is among the most sagacious of mankind. It would be almost ridiculous to descend from Bacon, even when his giant shadow does but pass over our scene, to the feebler class of political moralists, such as Saavedra, author of Idea di un principe politico, a wretched effort of Spain in her degeneracy; but an Italian writer must not be neglected, from the remarkable circumstance that he is esteemed one of the first who have treated the science of political œconomy. It must however be understood that, besides what may be found on the subject in the ancients, many valuable observations which must be referred to political œconomy occur in Bodin, that the Italians had, in the sixteenth century, a few tracts on coinage, that Botero touches some points of the science, and that in English there were, during the same age, pamphlets on public wealth, especially one intitled, A Brief Conceit of English Policy.*

Political œconomy.

Serra on the means of obtaining money without mines.

52. The author to whom we allude is Antonio Serra, a native of Cosenza, whose short treatise on the causes which may render gold and silver abundant in countries that have no mines is dedi-

* This bears the initials of W. S., which some have idiotically taken for William Shakspeare. I have some reason to believe, that there was an edition considerably earlier than that of 1584, but, from circumstances unnecessary to mention, cannot produce the manuscript authority on which this opinion is founded. It has been reprinted more than once, if I mistake not, in modern times.

cated to the Count de Lemos, "from the prison of Vicaria this tenth day of July 1613." It has hence been inferred, but without a shadow of proof, that Serra had been engaged in the conspiracy of his fellow-citizen Campanella fourteen years before. The dedication is in a tone of great flattery, but has no allusion to the cause of his imprisonment, which might have been any other. He proposes, in his preface, not to discuss political government in general, of which he thinks that the ancients have treated sufficiently, if we well understood their works, and still less to speak of justice and injustice, the civil law being enough for this, but merely of what are the causes that render a country destitute of mines abundant in gold and silver, which no one has ever considered, though some have taken narrow views, and fancied that a low rate of exchange is the sole means of enriching a country.

His causes of wealth.

53. In the first part of this treatise, Serra divides the causes of wealth, that is, of abundance of money, into general and particular accidents (accidenti communi e proprj), meaning by the former circumstances which may exist in any country, by the latter such as are peculiar to some. The common accidents are four; abundance of manufactures, character of the inhabitants, extent of commerce and wisdom of government. The peculiar are, chiefly, the fertility of the soil, and convenience of geographical position. Serra prefers manufactures to agriculture; one of his reasons is their indefinite capacity of multiplication; for no man whose land is fully cultivated

by sowing a hundred bushels of wheat, can sow with profit a hundred and fifty; but in manufactures he may not only double the produce, but do this a hundred times over, and that with less proportion of expense. Though this is now evident, it is perhaps what had not been much remarked before.

His praise of Venice.

54. Venice, according to Serra, held the first place as a commercial city, not only in Italy but in Europe; "for experience demonstrates that all the merchandizes which come from Asia to Europe pass through Venice and thence are distributed to other parts." But as this must evidently exclude all the traffic by the Cape of Good Hope, we can only understand Serra to mean the trade with the Levant. It is, however, worthy of observation that we are apt to fall into a vulgar error in supposing that Venice was crushed, or even materially affected, as a commercial city, by the discoveries of the Portuguese. She was in fact more opulent, as her buildings of themselves may prove, in the sixteenth century than in any preceding age. The French trade from Marseilles to the Levant, which began later to flourish, was what impoverished Venice, rather than that of Portugal with the East Indies. This republic was the perpetual theme of admiration with the Italians. Serra compares Naples with Venice; one, he says, exports grain to a vast amount, the other imports its whole subsistence; money is valued higher at Naples, so that there is a profit in bringing it in, its export is forbidden; at Venice it is free; at Naples the public revenues are expended in



CHAP. IV.

the kingdom; at Venice they are principally hoarded. Yet Naples is poor and Venice rich. Such is the effect of her commerce and of the wisdom of her government, which is always uniform, while in kingdoms, and far more in viceroyalties, the system changes with the persons. In Venice the method of chusing magistrates is in such perfection, that no one can come in by corruption or favour, nor can any one rise to high offices who has not been tried in the lower.

Low rate of exchange not essential to wealth.

55. All causes of wealth except those he has enumerated, Serra holds to be subaltern or temporary; thus the low rate of exchange is subject to the common accidents of commerce. It seems however to have been a theory of superficial reasoners on public wealth, that it depended on the exchanges far more than is really the case; and in the second part of this treatise Serra opposes a particular writer, named De Santis, who had accounted in this way alone for abundance of money in a state. Serra thinks that to reduce the weight of coin may sometimes be an allowable expedient, and better than to raise its denomination. The difference seems not very important. The coin of Naples was exhausted by the revenues of absentee proprietors, which some had proposed to withhold; a measure to which Serra justly objects. This book has been reprinted at Milan in the collection of Italian œconomists, and as it anticipates the principles of what has been called the mercantile theory, deserves some attention in following the progress of opinion. The once celebrated treatise of Mun, England's Treasure by

foreign Trade, is supposed to have been written before 1640; but as it was not published till after the Restoration, we may postpone it to the next period.

Hobbes. His political works.

56. Last in time among political philosophers before the middle of the century we find the greatest and most famous, Thomas Hobbes. His treatise De Cive was printed in 1642 for his private friends. It obtained however a considerable circulation and excited some animadversion. In 1647 he published it at Amsterdam with notes to vindicate and explain what had been censured. In 1650 an English treatise, with the Latin title, De Corpore Politico, appeared; and in 1651 the complete system of his philosophy was given to the world in the Leviathan. These three works bear somewhat the same relation to one another as the Advancement of Learning does to the treatise de Augmentis Scientiarum; they are in effect the same; the same order of subjects, the same arguments, and in most places either the same words or such variances as occurred to the second thoughts of the writer; but much is more copiously illustrated and more clearly put in the latter than in the former; while much also, from whatever cause, is withdrawn or considerably modified. Whether the Leviathan is to be reckoned so exclusively his last thoughts that we should presume him to have retracted the passages that do not appear in it, is what every one must determine for himself. I shall endeavour to present a comparative analysis of the three treatises, with some preference to the last.

CHAP. IV.

Analysis of his three treatises.

57. Those, he begins by observing, who have hitherto written upon civil polity have assumed that man is an animal framed for society; as if nothing else were required for the institution of commonwealths, than that men should agree upon some terms of compact which they call laws. But this is entirely false. That men do naturally seek each other's society, he admits in a note on the published edition of De Cive; but political societies are not mere meetings of men, but unions founded on the faith of covenants. Nor does the desire of men for society imply that they are fit for it. Many may desire it who will not readily submit to its necessary conditions.* This he left out in the two other treatises, thinking it, perhaps, too great a concession to admit any desire of society in man.

58. Nature has made little odds among men of mature age as to strength or knowledge. No reason therefore can be given why one should by any intrinsic superiority command others, or possess more than they. But there is a great difference in their passions; some through vain glory seeking pre-eminence over their fellows, some willing to allow equality, but not to lose what they know to be good for themselves. And this contest can only be decided by battle, showing which is the stronger.

* Societates autem civiles non sunt meri congressus, sed fœdera, quibus faciendis fides et pacta necessaria sunt. . . . Alia res est appetere, alia esse capacem. Appetunt enim illi qui tamen conditiones æquas, sine quibus societas esse non potest, accipere per superbiam non dignantur.

CHAP. IV.

59. All men desire to obtain good and to avoid evil, especially death. Hence they have a natural right to preserve their own lives and limbs, and to use all means necessary for this end. Every man is judge for himself of the necessity of the means, and the greatness of the danger. And hence he has a right by nature to all things, to do what he wills to others, to possess and enjoy all he can. For he is the only judge whether they tend or not to his preservation. But every other man has the same right. Hence there can be no injury towards another in a state of nature. Not that in such a state a man may not sin against God, or transgress the laws of nature.* But injury, which is doing anything without right, implies human laws that limit right.

60. Thus the state of man in natural liberty is a state of war, a war of every man against every man, wherein the notions of right and wrong, justice and injustice have no place. Irresistible might gives of itself right, which is nothing but the physical liberty of using our power as we will for our own preservation and what we deem conducive to it. But as, through the equality of natural powers, no man possesses this irresistible superiority, this state of universal war is contrary to his own good which he necessarily must desire. Hence his reason dictates that he should seek

* Non quod in tali statu peccare in Deum, aut leges naturales violare impossibile sit. Nam injustitia erga homines supponit leges humanas, quales in statu naturali nullæ sunt. De Cive, c. 1. This he left out in the later treatises. He says afterward (sect. 28.) omne damnum homini illatum legis naturalis violatio atque in Deum injuria est.

peace as far as he can, and strengthen himself by all the helps of war against those with whom he cannot have peace. This then is the first fundamental law of nature. For a law of nature is nothing else than a rule or precept found out by reason for the avoiding what may be destructive to our life.

61. From this primary rule another follows, that a man should be willing, when others are so too, as far forth as for peace and defence of himself he shall think it necessary, to lay down his right to all things, and to be contented with so much liberty against other men, as he would allow to other men against himself. This may be done by renouncing his right to any thing, which leaves it open to all, or by transferring it specially to another. Some rights indeed, as those to his life and limbs, are inalienable, and no man lays down the right of resisting those who attack them. But, in general, he is bound not to hinder those to whom he has granted or abandoned his own right, from availing themselves of it; and such hindrance is injustice or injury; that is, it is *sine jure*, his *jus* being already gone. Such injury may be compared to absurdity in argument, being in contradiction to what he has already done, as an absurd proposition is in contradiction to what the speaker has already allowed.

62. The next law of nature, according to Hobbes, is that men should fulfil their covenants. What contracts and covenants are, he explains in the usual manner. None can covenant with God, unless by special revelation; therefore vows are

not binding, nor do oaths add anything to the swearer's obligation. But covenants entered into by fear he holds to be binding in a state of nature, though they may be annulled by the law. That the observance of justice, that is, of our covenants, is never against reason, Hobbes labours to prove, for if ever its violation may have turned out successful, this being contrary to probable expectation ought not to influence us. "That which gives to human actions the relish of justice, is a certain nobleness or gallantness of courage rarely found; by which a man scorns to be beholden for the contentment of his life to fraud or breach of promise." * A short gleam of something above the creeping selfishness of his ordinary morality!

63. He then enumerates many other laws of nature, such as gratitude, complaisance, equity, all subordinate to the main one of preserving peace by the limitation of the natural right, as he supposes, to usurp all. These laws are immutable and eternal; the science of them is the only true science of moral philosophy. For that is nothing but the science of what is good and evil in the conversation and society of mankind. In a state of nature private appetite is the measure of good and evil. But all men agree that peace is good, and therefore the means of peace, which are the moral virtues or laws of nature, are good also, and their contraries evil. These laws of nature are not properly called such, but conclusions of reason as to what should be done or abstained from; they

* Leviathan, c. 15.

CHAP. IV.

are but theorems concerning what conduces to conservation and defence; whereas law is strictly the word of him that by right has command over others. But so far as these are enacted by God in Scripture, they are truly laws.

64. These laws of nature, being contrary to our natural passions, are but words of no strength to secure any one without a controlling power. For till such a power is erected, every man will rely on his own force and skill. Nor will the conjunction of a few men or families be sufficient for security, nor that of a great multitude guided by their own particular judgments and appetites. "For if we could suppose a great multitude of men to consent in the observation of justice and other laws of nature without a common power to keep them all in awe, we might as well suppose all mankind to do the same, and then there neither would be, nor need to be, any civil government or commonwealth at all, because there would be peace without subjection."* Hence it becomes necessary to confer all their power on one man, or assembly of men, to bear their person or represent them; so that every one shall own himself author of what shall be done by such representative. It is a covenant of each with each, that he will be governed in such a manner, if the other will agree to the same. This is the generation of the great Leviathan, or mortal God, to whom, under the immortal God, we owe our peace and defence. In him consists the essence of the commonwealth, which is one person, of whose acts a great multitude

* Lev. c. 17.

by mutual covenant have made themselves the authors. CHAP. IV.

65. This person, (including of course an assembly as well as individual) is the sovereign, and possesses sovereign power. And such power may spring from agreement or from force. A commonwealth by agreement or institution is when a multitude do agree and covenant one with another that whatever the major part shall agree to represent them, shall be the representative of them all. After this has been done, the subjects cannot change their government without its consent, being bound by mutual covenant to own its actions. If any one man should dissent, the rest would break their covenant with him. But there is no covenant with the sovereign. He cannot have covenanted with the whole multitude, as one party, because it has no collective existence till the commonwealth is formed; nor with each man separately, because the acts of the sovereign are no longer his sole acts, but those of the society, including him who would complain of the breach. Nor can the sovereign act unjustly towards a subject; for he who acts by another's authority cannot be guilty of injustice towards him; he may it is true commit iniquity, that is, violate the laws of God and nature, but not injury.

66. The sovereign is necessarily judge of all proper means of defence, of what doctrines shall be taught, of all disputes and complaints, of rewards and punishments, of war and peace with neighbouring commonwealths, and even of what shall

CHAP. IV.

be held by each subject in property. Property, he admits in one place, existed in families before the institution of civil society; but between different families there was no *meum* and *tuum*. These are by the law and command of the sovereign; and hence, though every subject may have a right of property against his fellow, he can have none against the sovereign. These rights are incommunicable, and inseparable from the sovereign power; there are others of minor importance, which he may alienate; but if any one of the former is taken away from him he ceases to be truly sovereign.

67. The sovereign power cannot be limited nor divided. Hence there can be but three simple forms of commonwealth; monarchy, aristocracy and democracy. The first he greatly prefers. The king has no private interest apart from the people, whose wealth, honour, security from enemies, internal tranquillity, are evidently for his own good. But in the other forms each man may have a private advantage to seek. In popular assemblies, there is always an aristocracy of orators, interrupted sometimes by the temporary monarchy of one orator. And though a king may deprive a man of all he possesses to enrich a flatterer or favourite, so may also a democratic assembly, where there may be as many Neros as orators, each with the whole power of the people he governs. And these orators are usually more powerful to hurt others than to save them. A king may receive counsel of whom he will, an assembly from those only who have a right to belong to it, nor can their counsel be

secret. They are also more inconstant both from passion and from their numbers; the absence of a few often undoing all that had been done before. A king cannot disagree with himself, but an assembly may do so, even to producing civil war.

68. An elective or limited king is not the sovereign, but the sovereign's minister; nor can there be a perfect form of government, where the present ruler has not power to dispose of the succession. His power therefore is wholly without bounds, and correlative must be the people's obligation to obey. Unquestionably there are risks of mischiefs and inconveniencies attending a monarchy; but these are less than in the other forms; and the worst of them is not comparable to those of civil war, or the anarchy of a state of nature, to which the dissolution of the commonwealth would reduce us.

69. In the exercise of government the sovereign is to be guided by one maxim, which contains all his duty: Salus populi suprema lex. And in this is to be reckoned not only the conservation of life, but all that renders it happy. For this is the end for which men entered into civil society, that they might enjoy as much happiness as human nature can attain. It would be therefore a violation of the law of nature, and of the trust reposed in them, if sovereigns did not study, as far as by their power it may be, that their subjects should be furnished with every thing necessary, not for life alone but for the delights of life. And even those who have acquired empire by conquest must desire to have men fit to serve them, and should in consistency

with their own aims, endeavour to provide what will increase their strength and courage. Taxes, in the opinion of Hobbes, should be laid equally, and rather on expenditure than on revenue; the prince should promote agriculture, fisheries and commerce, and in general whatever makes men happy and prosperous. Many just reflections on the art of government are uttered by Hobbes, especially as to the inexpediency of interfering too much with personal liberty. No man, he observes in another place, is so far free as to be exempted from the sovereign power; but if liberty consists in the paucity of restraining laws, he sees not why this may not be had in monarchy as well as in a popular government. The dream of so many political writers, a wise and just despotism, is pictured by Hobbes as the perfection of political society.

70. But, most of all, is the sovereign to be without limit by the power of the priesthood. This is chiefly to be dreaded, that he should command any thing under the penalty of death, and the clergy forbid it under the penalty of damnation. The pretensions of the see of Rome, of some bishops at home, and those of even the lowest citizens to judge for themselves and determine upon public religion, are dangerous to the state and the frequent cause of wars. The sovereign therefore is alone to judge whether religions are safely to be admitted or not. And it may be urged, that princes are bound to cause such doctrine as they think conducive to their subjects' salvation to be taught, forbidding every other, and that they cannot do otherwise in conscience. This however

he does not absolutely determine. But he is clearly of opinion that, though it is not the case where the prince is infidel*, the head of the state, in a Christian commonwealth, is head also of the church; that he, rather than any ecclesiastics, is the judge of doctrines; that a church is the same as a commonwealth under the same sovereign, the component members of each being precisely the same. This is not very far removed from the doctrine of Hooker, and still less from the practice of Henry VIII.

71. The second class of commonwealths, those by forcible acquisition, differ more in origin than in their subsequent character from such as he has been discussing. The rights of sovereignty are the same in both. Dominion is acquired by generation or by conquest; the one parental, the other despotical. Parental power, however, he derives not so much from having given birth to, as from having preserved, the child, and, with originality and acuteness, thinks it belongs by nature to the mother rather than to the father, except where there is some contract between the parties to the contrary. The act of maintenance and nourishment conveys, as he supposes, an unlimited power over the child, extending to life and death, and there can be no state of nature between parent and child. In his notion of patriarchal authority he seems to go as far as Filmer; but, more acute than Filmer, per-

* Imperantibus autem non Christianis in temporalibus quidem omnibus eandem deberi obedientiam etiam a cive Christiano extra controversiam est: in spiritualibus vero, hoc est, in iis quæ pertinent ad modum colendi Dei sequenda est ecclesia aliqua Christianorum. De Cive, c. 18. § 3.

CHAP. IV.

ceives that it affords no firm basis for political society. By conquest and sparing the lives of the vanquished they become slaves; and so long as they are held in bodily confinement, there is no covenant between them and their master; but in obtaining corporal liberty they expressly or tacitly covenant to obey him as their lord and sovereign.

72. The political philosophy of Hobbes had much to fix the attention of the world and to create a sect of admiring partizans. The circumstances of the time, and the character of the passing generation, no doubt powerfully conspired with its intrinsic qualities; but a system so original, so intrepid, so disdainful of any appeal but to the common reason and common interests of mankind, so unaffectedly and perspicuously proposed, could at no time have failed of success. From the two rival theories, on the one hand, that of original compact between the prince and people, derived from antiquity, and sanctioned by the authority of fathers and schoolmen, on the other, that of an absolute patriarchal transmuted into an absolute regal power, which had become prevalent among part of the English clergy, Hobbes took as much as might conciliate a hearing from both, an original covenant of the multitude, and an unlimited authority of the sovereign. But he had a substantial advantage over both these parties, and especially the latter, in establishing the happiness of the community as the sole final cause of government, both in its institution and its continuance; the great fundamental theorem upon which all political

science depends, but sometimes obscured or lost in the pedantry of theoretical writers. CHAP. IV.

73. In the positive system of Hobbes we find less cause for praise. We fall in at the very outset with a strange and indefensible paradox; the natural equality of human capacities, which he seems to have adopted rather in opposition to Aristotle's notion of a natural right in some men to govern, founded on their superior qualities, than because it was at all requisite for his own theory. By extending this alledged equality, or slightness of difference, among men to physical strength, he has more evidently shown its incompatibility with experience. If superiority in mere strength has not often been the source of political power it is for two reasons; first, because, though there is a vast interval between the strongest man and the weakest, there is generally not much between the former and him who comes next in vigour; and secondly, because physical strength is multiplied by the aggregation of individuals, so that the stronger few may be overpowered by the weaker many; while in mental capacity, comprehending acquired skill and habit as well as natural genius and disposition, both the degrees of excellence are removed by a wider distance, and what is still more important, the aggregation of individual powers does not regularly and certainly augment the value of the whole. That the real or acknowledged superiority of one man to his fellows has been the ordinary source of power is sufficiently evident from what we daily see among children, and must, it should seem, be admitted by all who derive civil authority

CHAP. IV.

from choice or even from conquest, and therefore is to be inferred from the very system of Hobbes.

74. That a state of nature is a state of war, that men, or at least a very large proportion of men, employ force of every kind in seizing to themselves what is in the possession of others is a proposition for which Hobbes incurred as much obloquy as for any one in his writings; yet it is one not easy to controvert. But soon after the publication of the Leviathan, a dislike of the Calvinistic scheme of universal depravity, as well as of his own, led many considerable men into the opposite extreme of elevating too much the dignity of human nature, if by that term they meant, and in no other sense could it be applicable to this question, the real practical character of the majority of the species. Certainly the sociableness of man is as much a part of his nature as his selfishness; but whether this propensity to society would necessarily or naturally have led to the institution of political communities, may not be very clear; while we have proof enough in historical traditions and in what we observe of savage nations, that mutual defence by mutual concession, the common agreement not to attack the possessions of each other, or to permit strangers to do so, has been the true basis, the final aim, of those institutions, be they more or less complex, to which we give the appellation of commonwealths.

75. In developing therefore the origin of civil society, Hobbes, though not essentially differing from his predecessors, has placed the truth in a fuller light. It does not seem equally clear, that his own theory of a mutual covenant between the

members of an unanimous multitude to become one people and to be represented, in all time to come, by such a sovereign government as the majority should determine, affords a satisfactory groundwork for the rights of political society. It is, in the first place, too hypothetical as a fact. That such an agreement may have been sometimes made by independent families, in the first coming together of communities, it would be presumptuous to deny—it carries upon the face of it no improbability except as to the design of binding posterity, which seems too refined for such a state of mankind as we must suppose; but it is surely possible to account for the general fact of civil government in a simpler way; and what is most simple, though not always true, is on the first appearance most probable. If we merely suppose an agreement, unanimous of course in those who concur in it, to be governed by one man, or by one council, promising that they shall wield the force of the whole against any one who shall contravene their commands issued for the public good, the foundation is as well laid, and the commonwealth as firmly established, as by the double process of a mutual covenant to constitute a people, and a popular determination to constitute a government. It is true that Hobbes distinguishes a commonwealth by institution, which he supposes to be founded on this unanimous consent, from one by acquisition, for which force alone is required. But as the force of one man goes but a little way towards compelling the obedience of others, so as to gain the name of sovereign power, unless it is aided by the force of many who volun-

tarily conspire to its ends, this sort of commonwealth by conquest will be found to involve the previous institution of the more peaceable kind.

76. This theory of a mutual covenant is defective also in a most essential point. It furnishes no adequate basis for any commonwealth beyond the lives of those who established it. The right indeed of men to bind their children and through them a late posterity is sometimes asserted by Hobbes, but in a very transient manner, and as if he was aware of the weakness of his ground. It might be inquired whether the force on which alone he rests the obligation of children to obey, can give any right beyond its own continuance; whether the absurdity he imputes to those who do not stand by their own engagements is imputable to such as disregard the covenants of their forefathers; whether, in short, any law of nature requires our obedience to a government we deem hurtful, because in a distant age, a multitude whom we cannot trace bestowed unlimited power on some unknown persons from whom that government pretends to derive its succession.

77. A better ground for the subsisting rights of his Leviathan, is sometimes suggested, though faintly, by Hobbes himself. "If one refuse to stand to what the major part shall ordain, or make protestation against any of their decrees, he does contrary to his covenant, and therefore unjustly: and whether he be of the congregation or not, whether his consent be asked or not, he must either submit to their decrees, or be left in the condition of war he was in before, wherein he might without

injustice be destroyed by any man whatsoever."* CHAP. IV.
This renewal of the state of war which is the state of nature, this denial of the possibility of doing an injury to any one who does not obey the laws of the commonwealth, is enough to silence the question why we are obliged still to obey. The established government and those who maintain it, being strong enough to wage war against gainsayers, give them the option of incurring the consequences of such warfare or of complying with the laws. But it seems to be a corollary from this, that the stronger part of a commonwealth, which may not always be the majority, have not only a right to despise the wishes but the interests of dissentients. Thus the more we scrutinize the theories of Hobbes, the more there appears a deficiency of that which only a higher tone of moral sentiment can give, a security against the appetites of others, and for them against our own. But it may be remarked that his supposition of a state of war, not as a permanent state of nature, but as just self-defence, is perhaps the best footing on which we can place the right to inflict severe, and especially capital, punishment upon offenders against the law.

78. The positions so dogmatically laid down as to the impossibility of mixing different sorts of government were, even in the days of Hobbes, contradicted by experience. Several republics had lasted for ages under a mixed aristocracy and democracy; and there had surely been sufficient evidence that a limited monarchy might exist, though, in the revolution of ages, it might one way

* Lev. c. 18.

CHAP. IV.

or other, pass into some new type of polity. And these prejudices in favour of absolute power are rendered more dangerous by paradoxes unusual from an Englishman, even in those days of high prerogative when Hobbes began to write, that the subject has no property relatively to the sovereign, and, what is the fundamental error of his whole system, that nothing done by the prince can be injurious to any one else. This is accompanied by the other portents of Hobbism, scattered through these treatises, especially the Leviathan, that the distinctions of right and wrong, moral good and evil, are made by the laws, that no man can do amiss who obeys the sovereign authority, that though private belief is of necessity beyond the prince's control, it is according to his will, and in no other way, that we must worship God.

79. The political system of Hobbes, like his moral system, of which in fact it is only a portion, sears up the heart. It takes away the sense of wrong, that has consoled the wise and good in their dangers, the proud appeal of innocence under oppression, like that of Prometheus to the elements, uttered to the witnessing world, to coming ages, to the just ear of Heaven. It confounds the principles of moral approbation, the notions of good and ill desert, in a servile idolatry of the monstrous Leviathan it creates, and after sacrificing all right at the altar of power, denies to the Omnipotent the prerogative of dictating the laws of his own worship.

CHAP. IV.

SECT. III.

Roman Jurisprudence — Grotius on the Laws of War and Peace — Analysis of this Work — Defence of it against some Strictures.

Civil jurists of this period.

80. In the Roman jurisprudence we do not find such a cluster of eminent men during this period as in the sixteenth century; and it would of course be out of our province to search for names little now remembered, perhaps, even in forensic practice. Many of the writings of Fabre of Savoy, who has been mentioned in the last volume, belong to the first years of this century. Farinacci, or Farinaceus, a lawyer of Rome, obtained a celebrity, which, after a long duration, has given way in the progress of legal studies, less directed than formerly towards a superfluous erudition.* But the work of Menochius de præsumptionibus, or, as we should say, on the rules of evidence, is said to have lost none of its usefulness, even since the decline of the civil law in France.† No book, perhaps, belonging to this period is so generally known as the commentaries of Vinnius on the Institutes, which, as far as I know, has not been superseded by any of later date. Conringius of Helmstadt may be reckoned in some measure among the writers on jurisprudence, though chiefly in the line of historical illustration. The Elementa Juris Civilis, by Zouch, is a mere epitome, but neatly executed, of the principal heads of the

* Biogr. Univ.

† Id.

Roman law, and nearly in its own words. Arthur Duck, another Englishman, has been praised even by foreigners, for a succinct and learned, though elementary and popular, treatise on the use and authority of the civil law in different countries of Europe. This little book is not disagreeably written; but it is not, of course, from England that much could be contributed towards Roman jurisprudence.

Suarez on laws.

81. The larger principles of jurisprudence, which link that science with general morals, and especially such as relate to the intercourse of nations, were not left untouched in the great work of Suarez on laws. I have not however made myself particularly acquainted with this portion of his large volume. Spain appears to have been the country in which these questions were originally discussed upon principles broader than precedent, as well as upon precedents themselves; and Suarez, from the general comprehensiveness of his views in legislation and ethics, is likely to have said well whatever he may have said on the subject of international law. It does not appear however that he is much quoted by later writers.

Grotius, De Jure Belli et Pacis.

82. The name of Suarez is obscure in comparison of one who soon came forward in the great field of natural jurisprudence. This was Hugo Grotius, whose famous work, De Jure Belli et Pacis, was published at Paris in 1625. It may be reckoned a proof of the extraordinary diligence as well as quickness of parts which distinguished this writer, that it had occupied a very short part of his life. He first mentions, in a letter to the

younger Thuanus in August 1623, that he was employed in examining the principal questions which belong to the law of nations.* In the same year he recommends the study of that law to another of his correspondents in such terms as bespeak his own attention to it.† According to one of his letters to Gassendi, quoted by Stewart, the scheme was suggested to him by Peiresc.

Success of this work.

83. It is acknowledged by every one that the publication of this treatise made an epoch in the philosophical, and almost we might say in the political history of Europe. Those who sought a guide to their own conscience or that of others, those who dispensed justice, those who appealed to the public sense of right in the intercourse of nations, had recourse to its copious pages for what might direct or justify their actions. Within thirty or forty years from its publication, we find the

* Versor in examinandis controversiis præcipuis quæ ad jus gentium pertinent. Epist. 75. This is not from the folio collection of his epistles, so often quoted in the second chapter of this volume, but from one antecedently published in 1648, and entitled Grotii Epistolæ ad Gallos.

† Hoc spatio exacto, nihil restat quod tibi æque commendem atque studium juris, non illius privati, ex quo leguleii et rabulæ victitant, sed gentium ac publici; quam præstabilem scientiam Cicero vocans consistere ait in fœderibus, pactionibus, conditionibus populorum, regum, nationum, in omni denique jure belli et pacis. Hujus juris principia quomodo ex morali philosophia petenda sunt, monstrare poterunt Platonis ac Ciceronis de legibus liber. Sed Platonis summas aliquas legisse suffecerit. Neque pœniteat ex scholasticis Thomam Aquinatem, si non perlegere, saltem inspicere secunda parte secundæ partis libri, quem Summam Theologiæ inscripsit; præsertim ubi de justitia agit ac de legibus. Usum propius monstrabunt Pandectæ, libro primo atque ultimo; et codex Justinianeus, libro primo et tribus postremis. Nostri temporis juris consulti pauci juris gentium ac publici controversias attigere, eoque magis eminent, qui id fecere, Vasquius, Hottomannus, Gentilis. Epist. xvi. This passage is useful in showing the views Grotius himself entertained as to the subject and ground-work of his treatise.

CHAP. IV.

work of Grotius generally received as authority by professors of the continental universities, and deemed necessary for the student of civil law, at least in the protestant countries of Europe. In England, from the difference of laws and from some other causes which might be assigned, the influence of Grotius was far slower, and even ultimately much less general. He was however treated with great respect as the founder of the modern law of nations, which is distinguished from what formerly bore that name by its more continual reference to that of nature. But when a book is little read it is easily misrepresented; and as a new school of philosophers rose up, averse to much of the principles of their predecessors, but, above all things, to their tediousness, it became the fashion not so much to dispute the tenets of Grotius, as to set aside his whole work, among the barbarous and obsolete schemes of ignorant ages. For this purpose various charges have been alledged against it by men of deserved eminence, not, in my opinion, very candidly, or with much real knowledge of its contents. They have had, however, the natural effect of creating a prejudice, which, from the sort of oblivion fallen upon the book, is not likely to die away. I shall therefore not think myself performing an useless task in giving an analysis of the treatise De Jure Belli et Pacis; so that the reader, having seen for himself what it is, may not stand in need of any arguments or testimony to refute those who have represented it as it is not.

84. The book may be considered as nearly original, in its general platform, as any work of man in an advanced stage of civilization and learning can be. It is more so, perhaps, than those of Montesquieu and Smith. No one had before gone to the foundations of international law so as to raise a complete and consistent superstructure; few had handled even separate parts, or laid down any satisfactory rules concerning it. Grotius enumerates a few preceding writers, especially Ayala and Albericus Gentilis, but does not mention Soto in this place. Gentilis, he says, is wont in determining controverted questions to follow either a few precedents not always of the best description, or even the authority of modern lawyers in their answers to cases, many of which are written with more regard to what the consulting parties desire, than to what real justice and equity demand.

Its originality.

85. The motive assigned for this undertaking is the noblest. "I saw," he says, "in the whole Christian world a licence of fighting, at which even barbarians might blush, wars begun on trifling pretexts or none at all, and carried on without reverence for any divine or human law, as if that one declaration of war let loose every crime." The sight of such a monstrous state of things had induced some, like Erasmus, to deny the lawfulness of any war to a Christian. But this extreme, as he justly observes, is rather pernicious than otherwise; for when a tenet so paradoxical and impracticable is maintained, it begets a prejudice against the more temperate course which he prepares to indicate.

Its motive and object.

CHAP. IV.

"Let therefore," he says afterwards, "the laws be silent in the midst of arms; but those laws only which belong to peace, the laws of civil life and public tribunals, not such as are eternal, and fitted for all seasons, unwritten laws of nature, which subsist in what the ancient form of the Romans denominated 'a pure and holy war.'" *

His authorities.

86. "I have employed in confirmation of this natural and national law the testimonies of philosophers, of historians, of poets, lastly even of orators; not that we should indiscriminately rely upon them; for they are apt to say what may serve their party, their subject, or their cause; but because when many at different times and places affirm the same thing for certain, we may refer this unanimity to some general cause, which in such questions as these can be no other than either a right deduction from some natural principle or some common agreement. The former of these denotes the law of nature, the latter that of nations; the difference whereof must be understood, not by the language of these testimonies, for writers are very prone to confound the two words, but from the nature of the subject. For whatever cannot be clearly deduced from true premises, and yet appears to have been generally admitted, must have had its origin in free consent. . . . . The sentences of poets and orators have less weight than those of history; and we often make use of them not so much to corroborate what we say, as to throw a kind of ornament over

* Eas res puro pioque duello repetundas censeo. It was a case prodigiously frequent in the opinion of the Romans.

it." "I have abstained," he adds afterwards, "from all that belongs to a different subject, as what is expedient to be done; since this has its own science, that of politics, which Aristotle has rightly treated by not intermingling any thing extraneous to it, while Bodin has confounded that science with this which we are about to treat. If we sometimes allude to utility, it is but in passing, and distinguishing it from the question of justice."*

Foundation of natural law.

87. Grotius derives the origin of natural law from the sociable character of mankind. "Among things common to mankind is the desire of society, that is, not of every kind of society, but of one that is peaceable and ordered according to the capacities of his nature with others of his species. Even in children before all instruction a propensity to do good to others displays itself, just as pity in that age is a spontaneous affection." We perceive by this remark that Grotius looked beyond the merely rational basis of natural law to the moral constitution of human nature. The conservation of such a sociable life is the source of that law which is strictly called natural, which comprehends, in the first place, the abstaining from all that belongs to others, and the restitution of it if by any means in our possession, the fulfilment of promises, the reparation of injury, and the right of human punishment. In a secondary sense, natural law extends to prudence, temperance and fortitude, as being suitable to man's nature. And in a similar lax sense we have that kind

* Prolegomena in librum de Jure Belli.

CHAP. IV.

of justice itself called distributive, (διανεμητικη) which prefers a better man to a worse, a relation to a stranger, a poorer man to a richer, according to the circumstances of the party and the case.* And this natural law is properly defined, "the dictate of right reason, pointing out a moral guilt or rectitude to be inherent in any action, on account of its agreement or disagreement with our rational and social nature; and consequently that such an action is either forbidden or enjoined by God the author of nature." † It is so immutable, that God himself cannot alter it; a position which he afterwards limits by a restriction we have seen in Suarez; that if God command any one to be killed, or his goods to be taken, this would not render murder or theft lawful, but being commanded by the lord of life and all things, it would cease to be murder or theft. This seems little better than a sophism unworthy of Grotius; but he meant to distinguish between an abrogation of the law of nature, and a dispensation with it in a particular instance. The original position, in fact, is not stated with sufficient precision or on a right principle.

Positive law.

88. Voluntary, or positive law is either human or revealed. The former is either that of civil communities, which are assemblages of freemen, living in society for the sake of laws and common utility, or that of nations, which derives its obli-

* Id. § 6—10.

† Jus naturale est dictatum rectæ rationis, indicans actui alicui, ex ejus convenientia aut disconvenientia cum ipsa natura rationali ac sociali, inesse moralem turpitudinem aut necessitatem moralem, ac consequenter ab auctore naturæ Deo talem actum aut vetari aut præcipi. L. i. c. 1. § 10.

gation from the consent of all or many nations; a law which is to be proved, like all unwritten law, by continual usage and the testimony of the learned. The revealed law he divides in the usual manner, but holds that no part of the Mosaic, so far as it is strictly a law, is at present binding upon us. But much of it is confirmed by the Christian Scriptures, and much is also obligatory by the law of nature. This last law is to be applied, *à priori*, by the conformity of the act in question to the natural and social nature of man; *à posteriori*, by the consent of mankind; the latter argument, however, not being conclusive, but highly probable, when the agreement is found in all, or in all the more civilized nations.*

Perfect and imperfect rights.

89. Perfect rights, after the manner of the jurists, he distinguishes from imperfect. The former are called *sua*, our own, properly speaking, the objects of what they styled commutative justice, — the latter are denominated fitnesses, (aptitudines) such as equity, gratitude, or domestic affection prescribe, but which are only the objects of distributive or equitable justice. This distinction is of the highest importance in the immediate subject of the work of Grotius; since it is agreed on all hands, that no law gives a remedy for the denial of these, nor can we justly, in a state of nature, have recourse to arms in order to enforce them.†

Lawful cases of war.

90. War, however, as he now proceeds to show, is not absolutely unlawful either by the law of nature or that of nations, or of revelation. The

* Lib. i. c. 1.

† Id. ibid.

CHAP. IV.

proof is, as usual with Grotius, very diffuse; his work being in fact a magazine of arguments and examples with rather a supererogatory profusion.* But the Anabaptist and Quaker superstition has prevailed enough to render some of his refutation not unnecessary. After dividing war into public and private, and showing that the establishment of civil justice does not universally put an end to the right of private war, since cases may arise, when the magistrate cannot be waited for, and others, where his interference cannot be obtained, he shows that public war may be either solemn and regular according to the law of nations, or less regular on a sudden emergency of self-defence; classing also under the latter any war, which magistrates not sovereign may in peculiar circumstances levy.† And this leads him to inquire what constitutes sovereignty; defining, after setting aside other descriptions, that power to be sovereign, whose acts cannot be invalidated at the pleasure of any other human authority, except one, which, as in the case of a successor, has exactly the same sovereignty as itself.‡

Resistance by subjects unlawful.

91. Grotius rejects the opinion of those who hold the people to be every where sovereign, so that they may restrain and punish kings for misgovernment; quoting many authorities for the irresponsibility of kings. Here he lays down the principles of non-resistance, which he more fully inculcates in the next chapter. But this is done

* C. 2.

† C. 3.

‡ Summa potestas illa dicitur, cujus actus alterius juri non subjacet, ita ut alterius voluntatis humanæ arbitrio irriti possint reddi. § 7.

with many distinctions as to the nature of the principality, which may be held by very different conditions. He speaks of patrimonial kingdoms, which, as he supposes, may be alienated like an inheritance. But where the government can be traced to popular consent, he owns that this power of alienation should not be presumed to be comprized in the grant. Those, he says, are much deceived who think that in kingdoms where the consent of a senate or other body is required for new laws, the sovereignty itself is divided; for these restrictions must be understood to have been imposed by the prince on his own will, least he should be entrapped into something contrary to his deliberate intention.* Among other things in this chapter, he determines that neither an unequal alliance, that is, where one party retains great advantages, nor a feudal homage take away the character of sovereignty, so far at least as authority over subjects is concerned.

92. In the next chapter, Grotius dwells more at length on the alledged right of subjects to resist their governors, and altogether repels it, with the exception of strict self-defence, or the improbable case of a hostile spirit, on the prince's part, extending to the destruction of his people. Barclay, the opponent of Buchanan and the Jesuits, had admitted the right of resistance against enormous cruelty. If the king has abdicated the government, or manifestly relinquished it, he may, after a time, be considered merely a private person. But mere negligence in government is by no means to be

* § 18.

CHAP. IV.

reckoned a relinquishment.* And he also observes, that if the sovereignty be divided between a king and part of his subjects or the whole, he may be resisted by force in usurping their share, because he is no longer sovereign as to that; which he holds to be the case, even if the right of war be in him, since that must be understood of a foreign war, and it could not be maintained that those who partake the sovereignty have not the right to defend it; in which predicament a king may lose even his own share by the right of war. He proceeds to the case of usurpation; not such as is warranted by long prescription, but while the circumstances that led to the unjust possession subsist. Against such an usurper he thinks it lawful to rebel, so long as there is no treaty or voluntary act of allegiance, at least if the government de jure sanctions the insurrection. But where there may be a doubt whether the lawful ruler has not acquiesced in the usurpation, a private person ought rather to stand by possession, than to take the decision upon himself. †

All men naturally have right of war.

93. The right of war, which we must here understand in the largest sense, the employment of force to resist force, though by private men, resides in all mankind. Solon, he says, taught us that those commonwealths would be happy, wherein each man thought the injuries of others were like his own. ‡ The mere sociability of human nature

* Si rex aut alius quis imperium abdicavit, aut manifeste habet pro derelicto, in eum post id tempus omnia licent, quæ in privatum. Sed minimè pro derelicto habere rem censendus est, qui eam tractat negligentius. C. 4. § 9.

† § 20.

‡ Εν ᾗ των αδικουμενων ουχ ἡττον οἱ μη αδικουμενοι προϐαλλονται και κολαζουσι τους αδικουντας. Ut cætera desint vincula, sufficit humanæ naturæ communio.

ought to suggest this to us. And, though Grotius does not proceed with this subject, he would not have doubted that we are even bound by the law of nature, not merely that we have a right, to protect the lives and goods of others against lawless violence, without the least reference to positive law or the command of a magistrate. If this has been preposterously doubted, or affected to be doubted, in England of late years, it has been less owing to the pedantry which demands an express written law upon the most pressing emergency, than to lukewarmness, at the best, in the public cause of order and justice. The expediency of vindicating these by the slaughter of the aggressors must depend on the peculiar circumstances; but the right is paramount to any positive laws, even if, which with us is not the case, it were difficult to be proved from them.

Right of self-defence.

94. We now arrive at the first and fundamental inquiry, what is the right of self-defence, including the defence of what is our own. There can, says Grotius, be no just cause of war (that is, of using force, for he is now on the most general ground) but injury. For this reason he will not admit of wars to preserve the balance of power. An imminent injury to ourselves or our property renders repulsion of the aggressor by force legitimate. But here he argues rather weakly and inconsistently through excess of charity, and acknowledging the strict right of killing one who would otherwise kill us, thinks it more praiseworthy to accept the alternative.* The right of killing one who inflicts

* Lib. ii. c. 1. §8. Gronovius observes pithily and truly on this: melius occidi quam occidere injuria; non melius occidi injuria quam occidere jure.

a smaller personal injury he wholly denies; and with respect to a robber, while he admits he may be slain by natural law, is of opinion that the Gospel has greatly limited the privilege of defending our property by such means. Almost all jurists and theologians of his day, he says, carry it farther than he does.* To public warfare he gives a greater latitude than to private self-defence, but without assigning any satisfactory reason; the true reason being that so rigid a scheme of ethics would have rendered his book an Utopian theory, instead of a practicable code of law.

95. Injury to our rights, therefore, is a just cause of war. But what are our rights? What is property? whence does it come? what may be its subjects? in whom does it reside? Till these questions are determined, we can have but crude and indefinite notions of injury, and consequently of the rights we have to redress it. The disquisition is necessary, but it must be long; unless indeed we acquiesce in what we find already written, and seek for no stable principles upon which this grand and primary question in civil society, the rights of property and dominion, may rest. Here then begins what has seemed to many the abandonment by Grotius of his general subject, and what certainly suspends for a considerable time the inquiry into international law, but still not, as it seems to me, an episodical digression, at least for the greater part, but a natural and legitimate investigation, springing immediately from the principal theme of

* Hodie omnes ferme tam jurisconsulti quam theologi doceant recte homines a nobis interfici rerum defendendarum causa. § 13.

the work, connected with it more closely at several intervals, and ultimately reverting into it. But of this the reader will judge as we proceed with the analysis.

Its origin and limitations.

96. Grotius begins with rather too romantic a picture of the early state of the world, when men lived on the spontaneous fruits of the earth, with no property except in what each had taken from the common mother's lap. But this happy condition did not, of course, last very long, and mankind came to separate and exclusive possession, each man for himself and against the world. Original occupancy by persons, and division of lands by the community, he rightly holds to be the two sources of territorial propriety. Occupation is of two sorts, one by the community, (per universitatem) the other (per fundos) by several possession. What is not thus occupied is still the domain of the state. Grotius conceives that mankind have reserved a right of taking what belongs to others in extreme necessity. It is a still more remarkable limitation of the right of property, that he carries very far his notions of that of transit, maintaining that not only rivers, but the territory itself of a state may be peaceably entered, and that permission cannot be refused, consistently with natural law, even in the case of armies; nor is the apprehension of incurring the hostility of the power who is thus attacked by the army passing through our territory a sufficient excuse.* This of course must now be exploded.

* Sic etiam metus ab eo in quem bellum justum movet is qui transit, ad negandum transitum non valet. Lib. ii. c. 2. § 13.

CHAP. IV.

Nor can, he thinks, the transit of merchandize be forbidden or impeded by levying any farther tolls than are required for the incident expenses. Strangers ought to be allowed to settle, on condition of obeying the laws, and even to occupy any waste tracts in the territory*; a position equally untenable. It is less unreasonably that he maintains the general right of mankind to buy what they want, if the other party can spare it; but he extends too far his principle, that no nation can be excluded by another from privileges which it concedes to the rest of the world. In all these positions, however, we perceive the enlarged and philanthropic spirit of the system of Grotius, and his disregard of the usages of mankind, when they clashed with his Christian principles of justice. But as the very contrary supposition has been established in the belief of the present generation, it may be doubtful whether his own testimony will be thought sufficient.

Right of occupancy.

97. The original acquisition of property was in the infancy of human societies, by division or by occupancy; it is now by occupancy alone. Paullus has reckoned as a mode of original acquisition, if we have caused anything to exist, si quid ipsi, ut in rerum natura esset, fecimus. This, though not well expressed, must mean the produce of labour. Grotius observes, that this resolves itself into a continuance of a prior right, or a new one by occupancy, and therefore no peculiar mode of acquisition. In those things which naturally belong to no one, there may be two sorts of occu-

* 16, 17.

pation, dominion or sovereignty, and property. And in the former sense at least, rivers and bays of the sea are capable of occupation. In what manner this may be done he explains at length.* But those who occupy a portion of the sea have no right to obstruct others in fishing. This had been the subject of a controversy with Selden; the one in his Mare Liberum denying, the other in his Mâre Clausum sustaining, the right of England to exclude the fishermen of Holland from the seas which she asserted to be her own.

Relinquishment of it.

98. The right of occupancy exists as to things derelict or abandoned by their owners. But it is of more importance to consider the presumptions of such relinquishment by sovereign states, as distinguished from mere prescription. The non-claim of the owner during a long period seems the only means of giving a right where none originally existed. It must be the silent acquiescence of one who knows his rights and has his free will. But when this abandonment has once taken place, it bars unborn claimants; for he who is not born, Grotius says, has no rights; ejus qui nondum est natus nullum est jus.†

Right over persons. By generation.

99. A right over persons may be acquired in three ways, by generation, by their consent, by their crime. In children we are to consider three periods; that of imperfect judgment, or infancy, that of adult age in the father's family, and that of emancipation or foris-familiation, when they have ceased to form a part of it. In the first of these, a child is capable of property in possession

* C. 3. † C. 4.

CHAP. IV.

but not in enjoyment. In the second, he is subject to the parent only in actions which affect the family. In the third, he is wholly his own master. All beyond this is positive law. The paternal power was almost peculiar to the Romans, though the Persians are said to have had something of the same. Grotius, we perceive, was no ally of those who elevated the patriarchal power, in order to found upon it a despotic polity; nor does he raise it by any means so high as Bodin. The customs of Eastern nations would, perhaps, have warranted somewhat more than he concedes.*

By consent. In marriage.

100. Consent is the second mode of acquiring dominion. The consociation of male and female is the first species of it, which is principally in marriage, for which the promise of the woman to be faithful is required. But he thinks that there is no mutual obligation by the law of nature; which seems designed to save the polygamy of the patriarchs. He then discusses the chief questions as to divorce, polygamy, clandestine marriages, and incest; holding, that no unions are forbidden by natural law except in the direct line. Concubines, in the sense of the Roman jurisprudence, are true Christian wives.†

In commonwealths.

101. In all other consociations except marriage, it is a rule that the majority can bind the minority. Of these the principal is a commonwealth. And here he maintains the right of every citizen to leave his country, and that the state retains no right over those it has banished. Subjection, which may arise from one kind of consent, is

* C. 5. † Id.

either private or public; the former is of several species, among which adoption, in the Roman sense, is the noblest, and servitude the meanest. In the latter case, the master has not the right of life and death over his servants, though some laws give him impunity. He is perplexed about the right over persons born in slavery, since his theory of its origin will not support it. But, in the case of public subjection, where one state becomes voluntarily subject to another, he finds no difficulty about the unborn, because the people is the same, notwithstanding the succession of individuals; which seems paying too much deference to a legal fiction.*

CHAP. IV.

Right of alienating subjects.

102. The right of alienating altogether the territory he grants to patrimonial sovereigns. But he denies that a part can be separated from the rest without its consent, either by the community, or by the sovereign, however large his authority may be. This he extends to subjection of the kingdom to vassalage. The right of alienating private property by testament is founded, he thinks, in natural law†; a position wherein I can by no means concur. In conformity with this, he derives the right of succession by intestacy from the presumed intention of the deceased, and proceeds to dilate on the different rules of succession established by civil laws. Yet the rule that paternal and maternal heirs shall take respectively what descended from the ancestors on each side, he

Alienation by testament.

* C. 5. † c. 6. § 14.

CHAP. IV.

conceives to be founded in the law of nature, though subject to the right of bequest.*

Rights of property by positive law.

103. In treating of the acquisition of property by the law of nations, he means only the arbitrary constitutions of the Roman and other codes. Some of these he deems founded in no solid reason, though the lawgivers of every country have a right to determine such matters as they think fit. Thus the Roman law recognizes no property in animals *feræ naturæ*, which that of modern nations gives, he says, to the owner of the soil where they are found, not unreasonably any more than the opposite maxim is unreasonable. So of a treasure found in the earth, and many other cases, wherein it is hard to say that the law of nature and reason prescribes one rule more than another.†

Extinction of rights.

104. The rights of sovereignty and property may terminate by extinction of the ruling or possessing family without provision of successors. Slaves then become free, and subjects their own masters. For there can be no new right by occupancy in such. Even a people or community may cease to exist, though the identity of persons or even of race is not necessary for its continuance. It may expire by voluntary dispersion, or by subjugation to another state. But mere change of place by simultaneous emigration will not destroy

* C. 7. In this chapter Grotius decides that parents are not bound by strict justice to maintain their children. The case is stronger the other way, in return for early protection. Barbeyrac thinks that aliment is due to children by strict right during infancy.

† § 8.

CHAP. IV.

a political society, much less a change of internal government. Hence a republic becoming a monarchy, it stands in the same relation to other communities as before, and in particular, is subject to all its former debts.*

Some casuistical questions.

105. In a chapter on the obligations which the right of property imposes on others than the proprietor, we find some of the more delicate questions in the casuistry of natural law, such as relate to the bonâ fide possessor of another's property. Grotius, always siding with the stricter moralists, asserts that he is bound not only to restore the substance but the intermediate profits, without any claim for the valuable consideration which he may have paid. His commentator Barbeyrac, of a later and laxer school of casuistry, denies much of this doctrine.†

Promises.

106. That great branch of ethics which relates to the obligation of promises has been so diffusively handled by the casuists, as well as philosophers,

* § 2. At the end of this chapter, Grotius unfortunately raises a question, his solution of which laid him open to censure. He inquires to whom the countries formerly subject to the Roman empire belong? And here he comes to the inconceivable paradox that that empire and the rights of the citizens of Rome still subsist. Gronovius bitterly remarks, in a note on this passage: Mirum est hoc loco summum virum, cum in præcipua quæstione non male sentiret, in tot salebras se conjecisse, totque monstra et chimæras confinxisse, ut aliquid novum diceret, et Germanis potius ludibrium deberet, quam Gallis et Papæ parum placeret. This however is very uncandid, as Barbeyrac truly points out; since neither of these could take much interest in a theory which reserved a supremacy over the world to the Roman people. It is probably the weakest passage in all the writings of Grotius, though there are too many which do not enhance his fame.

† C. 10. Our own jurisprudence goes upon the principles of Grotius, and even denies the possessor by a bad title, though bonâ fide, any indemnification for what he may have laid out to the benefit of the property, which seems hardly consonant to the strictest rules of natural law.

CHAP. IV.

that Grotius deserves much credit for the brevity with which he has laid down the simple principles, and discussed some of the more difficult problems. That mere promises, or *nuda pacta*, where there is neither mutual benefit, nor what the jurists call synallagmatic contract, are binding on the conscience, whatever they may be, or ought to be, in law, is maintained against a distinguished civilian, Francis Connan; nor does Barbeyrac seem to dispute this general tenet of moral philosophers. Puffendorf however says, that there is a tacit condition in promises of this kind, that they can be performed without great loss to the promiser, and Cicero holds them to be released, if their performance would be more detrimental to one party, than serviceable to the other. This gives a good deal of latitude; but perhaps they are in such cases open to compensation without actual fulfilment. A promise given without deliberation, according to Grotius himself, is not binding. Those founded on deceit or error admit of many distinctions; but he determines, in the celebrated question of extorted promises, that they are valid by the natural, though their obligation may be annulled by the civil law. But the promisee is bound to release a promise thus unduly obtained.*

* C.11. §7. It is not very probable that the promisee will fulfil this obligation in such a case; and the decision of Grotius, though conformable to that of the theological casuists in general, is justly rejected by Puffendorf and Barbeyrac, as well as by many writers of the last century. The principle seems to be, that right and obligation in matters of agreement are correlative, and where the first does not arise, the second cannot exist. Adam Smith and Paley incline to think the promise ought, under certain circumstances, to be kept; but the reasons they give are not founded on the *justitia expletrix*

Thus also the civil law may annul other promises, which would naturally be binding, as one of prospective marriage between persons already under that engagement towards another. These instances are sufficient to show the spirit in which Grotius always approaches the decision of moral questions; serious and learned, rather than profound in seeking a principle, or acute in establishing a distinction. In the latter quality he falls much below his annotator Barbeyrac, who had indeed the advantage of coming nearly a century after him.

CHAP. IV.

Contracts.

107. In no part of his work has Grotius dwelt so much on the rules and distinctions of the Roman law, as in his chapter on contracts, nor was it very easy or desirable to avoid it.* The wisdom of those great men, from the fragments of whose determinations the existing jurisprudence of Europe, in subjects of this kind, has been chiefly derived, could not be set aside without presumption, nor appropriated without ingratitude. Less fettered, at least in the best age of Roman jurisprudence, by legislative interference than our modern lawyers have commonly been, they resorted to no other principles than those of natural justice. That the

trix, which the proper obligation of promises, as such, requires. It is also a proof how little the moral sense of mankind goes along with the rigid casuists in this respect, that no one is blamed for defending himself against a bond given through duress or illegal violence, if the plea be a true one.

In a subsequent passage, l. iii. c. 19. § 4. Grotius seems to carry this theory of the duty of releasing an unjust promise so far, as to deny its obligation, and thus circuitously to agree with the opposite class of casuists.

* C. 12.

CHAP. IV.

Roman law, in all its parts, coincides with the best possible platform of natural jurisprudence it would be foolish to assert; but that in this great province, or rather demesne land, of justice, the regulation of contracts between man and man, it does not considerably deviate from the right line of reason, has never been disputed by any one in the least conversant with the Pandects.

Considered ethically.

108. It will be manifest however, to the attentive reader of Grotius in this chapter that he treats the subject of contract as a part of ethics rather than of jurisprudence; and it is only by the frequent parallelism of the two sciences that the contrary could be suspected. Thus he maintains that, equality being the principle of the contract by sale, either party is forced to restore the difference arising from a misapprehension of the other, even without his own fault, and this whatever may be the amount, though the civil law gives a remedy only where the difference exceeds one half of the price.* And in several other places he diverges equally from that law. Not that he ever contemplated what Smith seems to have meant by "natural jurisprudence," a theory of the principles which ought to run through and to be the foundation of the laws of all nations. But he knew that the judge in the tribunal, and the inward judge in the breast, even where their subjects of determination appear essentially the same, must have different boundaries to their jurisdiction; and that, as the general maxims and inflexible forms of external law, in attempts to accommodate themselves to the

* C. 12. § 12.

subtleties of casuistry, would become uncertain and arbitrary, so the finer emotions of the conscience would lose all their moral efficacy, by restraining the duties of justice to that which can be enforced by the law. In the course of this twelfth chapter we come to a question much debated in the time of Grotius, the lawfulness of usury. After admitting, against the common opinion, that it is not repugnant to the law of nature, he yet maintains the prohibition in the Mosaic code to be binding on all mankind.* An extraordinary position, it would seem, in one who had denied any part of that system to be truly an universal law. This was, however, the usual determination of casuists; but he follows it up, as was also usual, with so many exceptions as materially relax and invalidate the application of his rule.

Promissory oaths.

109. The next chapter, on promissory oaths, is a corollary to the last two. It was the opinion of Grotius, as it had been of all theologians, and, in truth, of all mankind, that a promise or contract not only becomes more solemn, and entails on its breach a severer penalty, by means of this adjuration of the Supreme Being, but may even acquire a substantial validity by it in cases where no prior obligation would subsist.† This chapter is distinguished by a more than usually profuse erudition. But notwithstanding the rigid observance of oaths which he deems incumbent by natural and revealed law, he admits of a considerable authority in the civil magistrate, or other superior, as a husband or

* § 20. † C. 13.

CHAP. IV.

father, to annul the oaths of inferiors before hand, or to dispense with them afterwards; not that they can release a moral obligation, but that the obligation itself is incurred under a tacit condition of their consent. And he seems, in rather a singular manner, to hint a kind of approval of such dispensations by the church.*

Engagements of kings towards subjects.

110. Whatever has been laid down by Grotius in the last three chapters as to the natural obligations of mankind, has an especial reference to the main purport of this great work, the duties of the supreme power. But the engagements of sovereigns give rise to many questions which cannot occur in those of private men. In the chapter which ensues, on the promises, oaths and contracts of sovereigns, he confines himself to those engagements which immediately affect their subjects. These it is of great importance, in the author's assumed province of the general confessor or casuist of kings, to place on a right footing; because they have never wanted subservient counsellors, who would wrest the law of conscience, as well as that of the land, to the interests of power. Grotius in denying that the sovereign may revoke his own contracts, extends this case to those made by him during his minority, without limitation to such as have been authorized by his guardians.† His contracts with his subjects create a true obligation, of which they may claim, though not enforce the performance. He hesi-

* § 20. Ex hoc fundamento defendi possunt absolutiones juramentorum, quæ olim a principibus, nunc ipsorum principum voluntate, quo magis cautum sit pietati, ab ecclesiæ præsidibus exercentur.

† C. 14. § 1.

tates whether to call this obligation a civil, or only a natural one; and in fact it can only be determined by positive law.* Whether the successors of a sovereign are bound by his engagements, must depend on the political constitution, and on the nature of the engagement. Those of an usurper he determines not to be binding, which should probably be limited to domestic contracts, though his language seems large enough to comprize engagements towards foreign states. †

Public treaties.

111. We now return from what, in strict language, may pass for a long digression, though not a needless one, to the main stream of international law. The title of the fifteenth chapter is on Public Treaties. After several divisions, which it would at present be thought unnecessary to specify so much at length, Grotius enters on a question not then settled by theologians, whether alliances with infidel powers were in any circumstances lawful. Francis I. had given great scandal in Europe by his league with the Turk. And though Grotius admits the general lawfulness of such alliances, it is under limitations which would hardly have borne out the court of France in promoting the aggrandizement of the common enemy of Christendom. Another, and more extensive head in the casuistry of nations relates to treaties that have been concluded without the authority of the sovereign. That he is not bound by these engagements is evident as a leading rule; but the

* § 6.

† Contractibus vero eorum qui sine jure imperium invaserunt, non tenebuntur populi aut veri reges, nam hi jus obligandi populum non habuerunt. § 14.

CHAP. IV.

course which, according to natural law, ought to be taken in such circumstances is often doubtful. The famous capitulation of the Roman army at the Caudine Forks is in point. Grotius, a rigid casuist, determines that the senate were not bound to replace their army in the condition from which the treaty had delivered them. And this seems to be a rational decision, though the Romans have sometimes incurred the censure of ill faith for their conduct. But if the sovereign has not only by silence acquiesced in the engagement of his ambassador or general, which of itself, according to Grotius, will not amount to an implied ratification, but recognized it by some overt act of his own, he cannot afterwards plead the defect of sanction.*

Their interpretation.

112. Promises consist externally in words, really in the intention of the parties. But as the evidence of this intention must usually depend on words, we should adapt our general rules to their natural meaning. Common usage is to determine the interpretation of agreements, except where terms of a technical sense have been employed. But if the expressions will bear different senses, or if there is some apparent inconsistency in different clauses, it becomes necessary to collect the meaning conjecturally, from the nature of the subject, from the consequences of the proposed interpretation, and from its bearing on other parts of the agreement. This serves to exclude unreasonable and unfair constructions from the equivocal language of treaties, such as was usual in

* C. 15.

former times to a degree which the greater prudence of contracting parties, if not their better faith, has rendered impossible in modern Europe. Among other rules of interpretation, whether in private or public engagements, he lays down one, familiar to the jurists, but concerning the validity of which some have doubted, that things favourable, as they style them, or conferring a benefit, are to be construed largely; things odious, or onerous to one party, are not to be stretched beyond the letter. Our own law, as is well known, adopts this distinction between remedial and penal statutes; and it seems, (wherever that which is favourable in one sense, is not odious in another) the most equitable principle in public conventions. The celebrated question, the cause, or, as Polybius more truly calls it, the pretext of the second Punic war, whether the terms of a treaty binding each party not to attack the allies of the other will comprehend those who had entered subsequently into alliance, seems, but rather on doubtful grounds, to be decided in the negative. Several other cases from history are agreeably introduced in this chapter.*

113. It is often, he observes, important to ascertain, whether a treaty be personal or real, that is, whether it affect only the contracting sovereign or the state. The treaties of republics are always real or permanent, even if the form of government should become monarchical; but the converse is not true as to those of kings, which are to be interpreted according to the probable mean-

* C. 16.

CHAP. IV.

ing where there are no words of restraint or extension. A treaty subsists with a king, though he may be expelled by his subjects; nor is it any breach of faith to take up arms against an usurper with the lawful sovereign's consent. This is not a doctrine which would now be endured.*

114. Besides those rules of interpretation which depend on explaining the words of an engagement, there are others which must sometimes be employed to extend or limit the meaning beyond any natural construction. Thus in the old law-case, a bequest, in the event of the testator's posthumous son dying, was held valid, where none was born, and instances of this kind are continual in the books of jurisprudence. It is equally reasonable sometimes to restrain the terms of a promise, where they clearly appear to go beyond the design of the promiser, or where supervenient circumstances indicate an exception which he would infallibly have made. A few sections in this place seem, perhaps, more fit to have been inserted in the eleventh chapter.

Obligation to repair injury.

115. There is a natural obligation to make amends for injury to the natural rights of another, which is extended by means of the establishment of property and of civil society to all which the laws have accorded him.† Hence a correlative right arises, but a right which is to be distinguished from fitness or merit. The jurists were accustomed to treat expletive justice, which consists in giving to every one what is strictly his own, separately

* C. 16. § 17. † C. 17.

from attributive justice, the equitable and right dispensation of all things according to desert. With the latter Grotius has nothing to do; nor is he to be charged with introducing the distinction of perfect and imperfect rights, if indeed those phrases are as objectionable as some have accounted them. In the far greater part of this chapter he considers the principles of this important province of natural law, the obligation to compensate damage, rather as it affects private persons than sovereign states. As, in most instances, this falls within the jurisdiction of civil tribunals, the rules laid down by Grotius may to a hasty reader seem rather intended as directory to the judge, than to the conscience of the offending party. This however is not by any means the case; he is here, as almost every where else, a master in morality and not in law. That he is not obsequiously following the Roman law will appear by his determining against the natural responsibility of the owner for injuries committed, without his fault, by a slave or a beast.* But sovereigns, he holds, are answerable for the piracies and robberies of their subjects when they are able to prevent them. This is the only case of national law which he discusses. But it is one of high importance, being in fact one of the ordinary causes of public hostility. This liability, however, does not exist, where subjects having obtained a lawful commission by letters of marque, become common pirates, and do not return home.

* This is in the 8th title of the 4th book of the Institutes: Si quadrupes pauperiem fecerit. Pauperies means damnum sine injuria.

CHAP. IV.

Rights by law of nations.

Those of ambassadors.

116. Thus far, the author begins in the eighteenth chapter, we have treated of rights founded on natural law, with some little mixture of the arbitrary law of nations. We come now to those which depend wholly on the latter. Such are the rights of ambassadors. We have now therefore to have recourse more to the usage of civilized people, than to theoretical principles. The practice of mankind has, in fact, been so much more uniform as to the privileges of ambassadors than other matters of national intercourse, that they early acquired the authority and denomination of public law. The obligation to receive ambassadors from other sovereign states, the respect due to them, their impunity in offences committed by their principals or by themselves, are not indeed wholly founded on custom, to the exclusion of the reason of the case, nor have the customs of mankind, even here, been so unlike themselves as to furnish no contradictory precedents; but they afford perhaps the best instance of a tacit agreement, distinguishable both from moral right and from positive convention, which is specifically denominated the law of nations. It may be mentioned, that Grotius determines in favour of the absolute impunity of ambassadors, that is, their irresponsibility to the tribunals of the country where they reside, in the case of personal crimes, and even of conspiracy against the government. This however he founds altogether upon what he conceives to have been the prevailing usage of civilized states.*

* C. 18.

117. The next chapter, on the right of sepulture, appears more excursive than any other in the whole treatise. The right of sepulture can hardly become a public question, except in time of war, and as such it might have been shortly noticed in the third book. It supplies Grotius, however, with a brilliant prodigality of classical learning.† But the next is far more important. It is entitled On Punishments. The injuries done to us by others give rise to our right of compensation and to our right of punishment. We have to examine the latter with the more care, that many have fallen into mistakes from not duly apprehending the foundation and nature of punishment. Punishment is, as Grotius rather quaintly defines it, Malum passionis, quod infligitur ob malum actionis, evil inflicted on another for the evil which he has committed. It is not a part of attributive and hardly of expletive justice, nor is it, in its primary design, proportioned to the guilt of the criminal, but to the magnitude of the crime. All men have naturally a right to punish crimes, except those who are themselves equally guilty; but though the criminal would have no ground to complain, the mere pleasure of revenge is not a sufficient motive to warrant us; there must be an useful end to render punishment legitimate. This end may be the advantage of the criminal himself, or of the injured party, or of mankind in general. The interest of the injured party here considered is not that of reparation, which, though it may be pro-

Right of sepulture

Punishments.

* C. 19.

CHAP. IV.

vided for in punishment, is no proper part of it, but security against similar offences of the guilty party or of others. All men may naturally seek this security by punishing the offender, and though it is expedient in civil society that this right should be transferred to the judge, it is not taken away, where recourse cannot be had to the law. Every man may even, by the law of nature, punish crimes by which he has sustained no injury; the public good of society requiring security against offenders, and rendering them common enemies.*

118. Grotius next proceeds to consider whether these rights of punishment are restrained by revelation, and concludes that a private Christian is not at liberty to punish any criminal, especially with death, for his own security or that of the public, but that the magistrate is expressly empowered by Scripture to employ the sword against malefactors. It is rather an excess of scrupulousness, that he holds it unbecoming to seek offices which give a jurisdiction in capital cases.†

119. Many things essentially evil are not properly punishable by human laws. Such are thoughts and intentions, errors of frailty, or actions from which, though morally wrong, human society suffers no mischief; or the absence of such voluntary virtues as compassion and gratitude. Nor is it always necessary to inflict lawful punishment, many circumstances warranting its remission. The ground of punishment is the guilt of the offender, its motive is the advantage expected from it. No

* C. 20. † Id.

punishment should exceed what is deserved, but it may be diminished according to the prospect of utility, or according to palliating circumstances. But though punishments should bear proportion to offences, it does not follow that the criminal should suffer no more evil than he has occasioned, which would give him too easy a measure of retribution. The general tendency of all that Grotius has said in this chapter is remarkably indulgent and humane, beyond the practice or even the philosophy of his age.*

120. War is commonly grounded upon the right of punishing injuries, so that the general principles upon which this right depends upon mankind, ought well to be understood before we can judge of so great a matter of national law. States, Grotius thinks, have a right, analogous to that of individuals out of society, to punish heinous offences against the law of nature or of nations, though not affecting themselves, or even any other independent community. But this is to be done very cautiously, and does not extend to violations of the positive divine law, or to any merely barbarous and irrational customs. Wars undertaken only on this score are commonly suspicious. But he goes on to determine that war may be justly waged against those who deny the being and providence of God, though not against idolaters, much less for the sake of compelling any nation to embrace Christianity, unless they persecute its professors, in which case they are justly liable to punishment. He pro-

* C. 20.

CHAP. IV.

nounces strongly in this place against the persecution of heretics.*

121. This is the longest chapter in the work of Grotius. Several of his positions, as the reader may probably have observed, would not bear a close scrutiny; the rights of individuals in a state of nature, of magistrates in civil society, and of independent communities, are not kept sufficiently distinct; the equivocal meaning of right, as it exists correlatively between two parties, and as it comprehends the general obligations of moral law, is not always guarded against. It is, notwithstanding these defects, a valuable commentary, regard being had to the time when it appeared, on the principles both of penal jurisprudence, and of the rights of war.

Their responsibility.

122. It has been a great problem, whether the liability to punishment can be transmitted from one person to another. This may be asked as to those who have been concerned in the crime, and those who have not. In the first case, they are liable as for their own offence, in having commanded, connived at, permitted, assisted, the actors in the crime before or after its perpetration. States are answerable for the delinquencies of their subjects when unpunished. They are also bound either to punish, or to deliver up, those who take refuge within their dominions from the justice of their own country. He seems however to admit afterwards, that they need only command such persons to quit the country. But they have a right to

* C. 20.

inquire into and inform themselves of the guilt alledged, the ancient privileges of suppliants being established for the sake of those who have been unjustly persecuted at home. The practice of modern Europe, he owns, has limited this right of demanding the delivery or punishment of refugees within narrow bounds. As to the punishment of those who have been wholly innocent of the offence, Grotius holds it universally unjust, but distinguishes it from indirect evil, which may often fall on the innocent. Thus, when the estate of a father is confiscated, his children suffer, but are not punished; since their succession was only a right contingent on his possession at his death.* It is a consequence from this principle, that a people, so far subject to its sovereign as to have had no control upon his actions, cannot justly incur punishment on account of them.

Insufficient causes of war.

123. After distinguishing the causes of war into pretexts and motives, and setting aside wars without any assignable justification as mere robberies, he mentions several pretexts which he deems insufficient, such as the aggrandisement of a neighbour; his construction of fortresses; the right of discovery, where there is already a possessor, however bar-

* C. 21. § 10. Hence it would follow, by the principle of Grotius, that our law of forfeiture in high treason is just, being part of the direct punishment of the guilty; but that of attainder, or corruption of blood, is unjust, being an infliction on the innocent alone. I incline to concur in this distinction, and think it at least plausible, though it was seldom or never taken in the discussions concerning those two laws. Confiscation is no more unjust towards the posterity of an offender than fine, from which of course it only differs in degree: and, on the other hand, the law has as much right to exclude that posterity from enjoying property at all, as from enjoying that which descends from a third party through the blood, as we call it, of a criminal ancestor.

CHAP. IV.

barous; the necessity of occupying more land. And here he denies, both to single men and to a people, the right of taking up arms in order to recover their liberty. He laughs at the pretended right of the emperor or of the pope to govern the world; and concludes with a singular warning against wars undertaken upon any pretended explanation of scriptural prophecies.* It will be anticipated from the scrupulousness of Grotius in all his casuistry, that he enjoins sovereigns to abstain from war in a doubtful cause, and to use all convenient methods of avoiding it by conference, arbitration, or even by lot. Single combat itself, as a mode of lot, he does not wholly reject. In answer to a question often put, Whether a war can be just on both sides? he replies that, in relation to the cause or subject, it cannot be so, since there cannot be two opposite rights; but since men may easily be deceived as to the real right, a war may be just on both sides with respect to the agents.† In another part of his work, he observes that resistance, even where the cause is not originally just, may become such by the excess of the other party.

Duty of avoiding it.

124. The duty of avoiding war, even in a just cause, as long as possible, is rather part of moral virtue in a large sense, than of mere justice. But, besides the obligations imposed on us by humanity and by Christian love, it is often expedient for our own interests to avoid war. Of this, however, he says little, it being plainly a matter of civil prudence with which he has no concern.‡ Dismissing

And expediency.

* C. 22. † C. 23 ‡ C. 24.

therefore the subject of this chapter, he comes to the justice of wars undertaken for the sake of others. Sovereigns, he conceives, are not bound to take up arms in defence of any one of their subjects, who may be unjustly treated. Hence, a state may abandon those whom it cannot protect without great loss to the rest; but whether an innocent subject may be delivered up to an enemy is a more debated question. Soto and Vasquez, casuists of great name, had denied this; Grotius however determines it affirmatively. This seems a remarkable exception from the general inflexibility of his adherence to the rule of right. For on what principle of strict justice can a people, any more than private persons, sacrifice, or put in jeopardy, the life of an innocent man? Grotius is influenced by the supposition, that the subject ought voluntarily to surrender himself into the hands of the enemy for the public good: but no man forfeits his natural rights by refusing to perform an action not of strict social obligation.*

CHAP. IV.

War for the sake of other subjects.

125. Next to subjects are allies, whom the state has bound itself to succour; and friendly powers, though without alliance, may also be protected from unjust attack. This extends even to all mankind; though war in behalf of strangers is not obligatory. It is also lawful to deliver the subjects of others from extreme manifest oppression of their rulers; and though this has often been a mere pretext, we are not on that account to deny the justice of an honest interference. He even thinks

Allies.

Strangers.

* C. 25.

CHAP. IV.

the right of foreign powers, in such a case, more unequivocal than that of the oppressed people themselves. At the close of this chapter he protests strongly against those who serve in any cause for the mere sake of pay, and holds them worse than the common executioner, who puts none but criminals to death.*

None to serve in an unjust war.

126. In the twenty-sixth and concluding chapter of this second book, Grotius investigates the lawfulness of bearing arms at the command of superiors, and determines that subjects are indispensably bound not to serve in a war which they conceive to be clearly unjust. He even inclines, though admitting the prevailing opinion to be otherwise, to think, that in a doubtful cause, they should adhere to the general moral rule in case of doubt, and refuse their personal service. This would evidently be impracticable and ultimately subversive of political society. It however denotes the extreme scrupulosity of his mind. One might smile at another proof of this, where he determines that the hangman, before the performance of his duty, should satisfy himself as to the justice of the sentence.†

Rights in war.

127. The rights of war, that is, of commencing hostility, have thus far been investigated with a comprehensiveness that has sometimes almost hidden the subject. We come now, in the third book, to rights in war. Whatever may be done in war, is permitted either by the law of nature or that of nations. Grotius begins with the first.

* C. 25. † C. 26.

The means morally, though not physically, necessary to attain a lawful end are themselves lawful; a proposition which he seems to understand relatively to the rights of others, not to the absolute moral quality of actions; distinctions which are apt to embarrass him. We have therefore a right to employ force against an enemy, though it may be the cause of suffering to innocent persons. The principles of natural law authorize us to prevent neutrals from furnishing an enemy with the supplies of war, or with any thing else essential for his resistance to our just demands of redress, such as provisions in a state of siege. And it is remarkable that he refers this latter question to natural law, because he had not found any clear decision of it by the positive law of nations.*

Use of deceit.

128. In acting against an enemy force is the nature of war. But it may be inquired, whether deceit is not also a lawful means of success? The practice of nations and the authority of most writers seem to warrant it. Grotius dilates on different sorts of artifice, and after admitting the lawfulness of such as deceive by indications, comes to the question of words equivocal or wholly false. This he first discusses on the general moral principle of veracity, more prolixly, and with more deference to authority, than would suit a modern reader; yet this basis is surely indispensable for the support of any decision in public casuistry. The right, however, of employing falsehood towards an enemy, which he generally admits, does not ex-

* L. iii. c. 1.

CHAP. IV.

tend to promises, which are always to be kept, whether express or implied, especially when confirmed by oath. And more greatness of mind, as well as more Christian simplicity would be shown by abstaining wholly from falsehood in war. The law of nature does not permit us to tempt any one to do that which in him would be criminal, as to assassinate his sovereign, or to betray his trust. But we have a right to make use of his voluntary offers.*

Rules and customs of nations.

129. Grotius now proceeds from the consideration of natural law or justice to that of the general customs of mankind, in which, according to him, the arbitrary law of nations consists. By this, in the first place, though naturally no one is answerable for another, it has been established that the property of every citizen is as it were mortgaged for the liabilities of the state to which he belongs. Hence, if justice is refused to us by the sovereign, we have a right to indemnification out of the property of his subjects. This is commonly called reprisals; and it is a right which every private person would enjoy, were it not for the civil laws of most countries, which compel him to obtain the authorization of his own sovereign, or of some tribunal. By an analogous right the subjects of a foreign state have sometimes been seized in return for one of our own subjects unjustly detained by their government.†

Reprisals.

Declarations of war.

130. A regular war, by the law of nations, can only be waged between political communities.

* L. iii. c. 1.

† C. 2.

Wherever there is a semblance of civil justice and fixed law, such a community exists, however violent may be its actions. But a body of pirates or robbers are not one. Absolute independence, however, is not required for the right of war. A formal declaration of war, though not necessary by the law of nature, has been rendered such by the usage of civilized nations. But it is required, even by the former, that we should demand reparation for an injury, before we seek redress by force. A declaration of war may be conditional or absolute; and it has been established as a ratification of regular hostilities, that they may not be confounded with the unwarranted acts of private men. No interval of time is required for their commencement after declaration.

Rights by law of nations over enemies.

131. All is lawful during war, in one sense of the word, which by the law and usage of nations is dispunishable. And this, in formal hostilities, is as much the right of one side as of the other. The subjects of our enemy, whether active on his side or not, become liable to these extreme rights of slaughter and pillage; but it seems that, according to the law of nations, strangers should be exempted from them, unless by remaining in the country they serve his cause. Women, children, and prisoners may be put to death; quarter or capitulation for life refused. On the other hand, if the law of nations is less strict in this respect than that of nature, it forbids some things which naturally might be allowable means of defence,

as the poisoning an enemy, or the wells from which he is to drink. But the assassination of an enemy is not contrary to the law of nations, unless by means of traitors, and even this is held allowable against a rebel or robber, who are not protected by the rules of formal war. But the violation of women is contrary to the law of nations.* The rights of war with respect to enemies' property are unlimited, without exception even of churches or sepulchral monuments, sparing always the bodies of the dead.†

132. By the law of nature, Grotius thinks that we acquire a property in as much of the spoil as is sufficient to indemnify us, and to punish the aggressor. But the law of nations carries this much farther, and gives an unlimited property in all that has been acquired by conquest, which mankind are bound to respect. This right commences as soon as the enemy has lost all chance of recovering his losses; which is, in moveables, as soon as they are in a place within our sole power. The transfer of property in territories is not so speedy. The goods of neutrals are not thus transferred, when found in the cities or on board the vessels of an enemy. Whether the spoil belongs to the captors, or to their sovereign, is so disputed a question, that it can hardly be reckoned a part of that law of nations, or universal usage, with which Grotius is here concerned. He thinks however that what is taken in public enterprizes appertains to the state; and that this

* C. 4. † C. [illegible]

has been the general practice of mankind. The civil laws of each people may modify this, and have frequently done so.*

CHAP. IV.

133. Prisoners, by the law of nations, become slaves of the captor, and their posterity also. He may treat them as he pleases with impunity. This has been established by the custom of mankind, in order that the conqueror might be induced to spare the lives of the vanquished. Some theologians deny the slave, even when taken in an unjust war, the right of making his escape, from whom Grotius dissents. But he has not a right, in conscience, to resist the exercise of his master's authority. This law of nations, as to the slavery of prisoners, as he admits, has not been universally received, and is now abolished in Christian countries out of respect to religion.† But, strictly, as an individual may be reduced into slavery, so may a whole conquered people. It is of course at the discretion of the conqueror to remit a portion of his right, and to leave as much of their liberties and possessions untouched as he pleases.‡

Prisoners become slaves.

134. The next chapter relates to the right of postliminium, one depending so much on the peculiar fictions of the Roman jurists, that it seems strange to discuss it as part of an universal law of nations at all. Nor does it properly belong to the rights of war, which are between belligerent parties. It is certainly consonant to natural justice, that a citizen returning from captivity should be fully restored to every privilege and all property that he

Right of postliminium.

* C. 6. † C. 7. ‡ C. 8.

CHAP. IV.

had enjoyed at home. In modern Europe there is little to which the jus postliminii can even by analogy be applied. It has been determined, in courts of admiralty, that vessels recaptured after a short time do not revert to their owner. This chapter must be reckoned rather episodical.*

Moral limitation of rights in war.

135. We have thus far looked only at the exterior right, accorded by the law of nations to all who wage regular hostilities in a just or unjust quarrel. This right is one of impunity alone, but before our own conscience, or the tribunal of moral approbation in mankind, many things hitherto spoken of as lawful must be condemned. In the first place, an unjust war renders all acts of force committed in its prosecution unjust, and binds the aggressor before God to reparation. Every one, general or soldier, is responsible in such cases for the wrong he has commanded or perpetrated. Nor can any one knowingly retain the property of another obtained by such a war, though he should come to the possession of it with good faith.† And as nothing can be done, consistently with moral justice, in an unjust war, so, however legitimate our ground for hostilities may be, we are not at liberty to transgress the boundaries of equity and humanity. In this chapter, Grotius, after dilating with a charitable abundance of examples and authorities in favour of clemency in war, even towards those who have been most guilty in provoking it, specially indicates women, old men, and children, as always to be spared, extending this

* C. 9. † C. 10.

also to all whose occupations are not military. Prisoners are not to be put to death, nor are towns to be refused terms of capitulation. He denies that the law of retaliation, or the necessity of striking terror, or the obstinate resistance of an enemy, dispense with the obligation of saving his life. Nothing but some personal crime can warrant the refusal of quarter or the death of a prisoner. Nor is it allowable to put hostages to death.*

CHAP. IV.

Moderation required as to spoil.

136. All unnecessary devastation ought to be avoided, such as the destruction of trees, of houses, especially ornamental and public buildings, and of every thing not serviceable in war, nor tending to prolong it, as pictures and statues. Temples and sepulchres are to be spared for the same or even stronger reasons. Though it is not the object of Grotius to lay down any political maxims, he cannot refrain in this place from pointing out several considerations of expediency, which should induce us to restrain the licence of arms within the limits of natural law.† There is no right by nature to more booty, strictly speaking, than is sufficient for our indemnity, wherein are included the expenses of the war. And the property of innocent persons, being subjects of our enemies, is only liable in failure of those who are primarily aggressors.‡

And as to prisoners.

137. The persons of prisoners are only liable, in strict moral justice, so far as is required for satisfaction of our injury. The slavery into which they may be reduced ought not to extend farther than an obligation of perpetual servitude in return for

* C. 11. † C. 12. ‡ C. 13.

CHAP. IV.

maintenance. The power over slaves by the law of nature is far short of what the arbitrary law of nations permits, and does not give a right of exacting too severe labour, or of inflicting punishment beyond desert. The peculium, or private acquisitions of a slave by economy or donation, ought to be reckoned his property. Slaves, however, captured in a just war, though one in which they have had no concern, are not warranted in conscience to escape and recover their liberty. But the children of such slaves are not in servitude by the law of nature, except so far as they have been obliged to their master for subsistence in infancy. With respect to prisoners, the better course is to let them redeem themselves by a ransom, which ought to be moderate.*

Also in conquest.

138. The acquisition of that sovereignty which was enjoyed by a conquered people, or by their rulers, is not only legitimate, so far as is warranted by the punishment they have deserved, or by the value of our own loss, but also so far as the necessity of securing ourselves extends. This last is what it is often unsafe to remit out of clemency. It is a part of moderation in victory to incorporate the conquered with our own citizens on equal terms, or to leave their independence on reasonable precautions for our own security. If this cannot be wholly conceded, their civil laws and municipal magistracies may be preserved, and, above all, the free exercise of their religion. The interests of conquerors are as much consulted, generally, as

* C. 14.

their reputation, by such lenient use of their advantages.*

CHAP. IV.

And in restitution to right owners.

139. It is consonant to natural justice that we should restore to the original owners all of which they have been despoiled in an unjust war, when it falls into our hands by a lawful conquest, without regard to the usual limits of postliminium. Thus, if an ambitious state comes to be stripped of its usurpations, this should be not for the benefit of the conqueror but of the ancient possessors. Length of time, however, will raise the presumption of abandonment.† Nothing should be taken in war from neutral states, except through necessity and with compensation. The most ordinary case is that of the passage of troops. The neutral is bound to strict impartiality in a war of doubtful justice.‡ But it seems to be the opinion of Grotius, that by the law of nature, every one, even a private man, may act in favour of the innocent party as far as the rights of war extend, except that he cannot appropriate to himself the possessions of the enemy; that right being one founded on indemnification. But civil and military laws have generally restrained this to such as obey the express order of their government.§

Promises to enemies and pirates.

140. The licence of war is restrained either by the laws of nature and nations, which have been already discussed, or by particular engagement. The obligation of promises extends to enemies, who are still parts of the great society of mankind. Faith is to be kept even with tyrants, rob-

* C. 15. † C. 16. ‡ C. 17. § C. 19.

CHAP. IV. bers, and pirates. He here again adverts to the case of a promise made under an unjust compulsion; and possibly his reasoning on the general principle is not quite put in the most satisfactory manner. It would now be argued that the violation of engagements towards the worst of mankind, who must be supposed to have some means of self-defence, on account of which we propose to treat with them, would produce a desperation among men in similar circumstances injurious to society. Or it might be urged, that men do not lose by their crimes a right to the performance of all engagements, especially when they have fulfilled their own share in them, but only of such as involve a positive injustice towards the other party. In this place he repeats his former doctrine, that the most invalid promise may be rendered binding by the addition of an oath. It follows from the general rule, that a prince is bound by his engagements to rebel subjects; above all, if they have had the precaution to exact his oath. And thus a change in the constitution of a monarchy may legitimately take place, and it may become mixed instead of absolute by the irrevocable concession of the sovereign. The rule, that promises made under an unjust compulsion are not obligatory, has no application in a public and regular war.* Barbeyrac remarks on this, that if a conqueror, like Alexander, subdues an unoffending

* C.19. § 11. There seems, as has been intimated above, to be some inconsistency in the doctrine of Grotius with respect to the general obligation of such promises, which he maintains in the second book; and now, as far as I collect his meaning, denies by implication.

people with no specious pretext at all, he does not perceive why they should be more bound in conscience to keep the promises of obedience they may have been compelled to enter into, than if he had been an ordinary bandit. And this remark shows us, that the celebrated problem in casuistry, as to the obligation of compulsory promises, has far more important consequences than the payment of a petty sum to a robber. In two cases, however, Grotius holds that we are dispensed from keeping an engagement towards an enemy. One of these is, when it has been conditional, and the other party has not fulfilled his part of the convention. This is of course obvious, and can only be open to questions as to the precedence of the condition. The other case is where we retain what is due to us by way of compensation, notwithstanding our promise. This is permissible in certain instances.*

CHAP. IV.

Treaties concluded by competent authority.

141. The obligation of treaties of peace depends on their being concluded by the authority which, according to the constitution of the state, is sovereign for this purpose. Kings who do not possess a patrimonial sovereignty cannot alienate any part of their dominions without the consent of the nation or its representatives; they must even have the consent of the city or province which is thus to be transferred. In patrimonial kingdoms, the sovereign may alienate the whole, but not always a part, at pleasure. He seems however to admit an ultimate

* C. 19.

CHAP. IV.

right of sovereignty, or *dominium eminens*, by which all states may dispose of the property of their subjects, and consequently alienate it for the sake of a great advantage, but subject to the obligation of granting them an indemnity. He even holds that the community is naturally bound to indemnify private subjects for the losses they sustain in war, though this right of reparation may be taken away by civil laws. The right of alienation by a treaty of peace is only questionable between the sovereign and his subjects; foreign states may presume its validity in their own favour.*

Matters relating to them.

142. Treaties of peace are generally founded on one of two principles; that the parties shall return to the condition wherein they were before the commencement of hostilities, or that they shall retain what they possess at their conclusion. The last is to be presumed in a case of doubtful interpretation. A treaty of peace extinguishes all public grounds of quarrel, whether known to exist or not, but does not put an end to the claims of private men subsisting before the war, the extinguishment of which is never to be presumed. The other rules of interpretation which he lays down are, as usual with him, derived rather from natural equity than the practice of mankind, though with no neglect or scorn of the latter. He maintains the right of giving an asylum to the banished, but not of receiving large bodies of men who abandon their country.†

143. The decision of lot may be adopted in

* C. 20. † Id.

CHAP. IV.

some cases, in order to avoid a war, wherein we have little chance of resisting an enemy. But that of single combat, according to Grotius's opinion, though not repugnant to the law of nature, is incompatible with Christianity; unless in the case where a party, unjustly assailed, has no other means of defence. Arbitration by a neutral power is another method of settling differences, and in this we are bound to acquiesce. Wars may also be terminated by implicit submission or by capitulation. The rights this gives him have been already discussed. He concludes this chapter with a few observations upon hostages and pledges. With respect to the latter he holds that they may be reclaimed after any lapse of time, unless there is a presumption of tacit abandonment.*

Truces and conventions.

144. A truce is an interval of war, and does not require a fresh declaration at its close. No act of hostility is lawful during its continuance; the infringement of this rule by either party gives the other a right to take up arms without delay. Safe conducts are to be construed liberally, rejecting every meaning of the words which does not reach their spirit. Thus a safe conduct to go to a place implies the right of returning unmolested. The ransom of prisoners ought to be favoured.† A state is bound by the conventions in war made by its officers, provided they are such as may reasonably be presumed to lie within their delegated authority, or such as they have a special commission to warrant, known to the other con-

* C. 20. † C. 21.

tracting party. A state is also bound by its tacit ratification in permitting the execution of any part of such a treaty, though in itself not obligatory, and also by availing itself of any advantage thereby. Grotius dwells afterwards on many distinctions relating to this subject, which however, as far as they do not resolve themselves into the general principle, are to be considered on the ground of positive regulation.*

Those of private persons.

145. Private persons, whether bearing arms or not, are as much bound as their superiors by the engagements they contract with an enemy. This applies particularly to the parole of a prisoner. The engagement not to serve again, though it has been held null by some jurists, as contrary to our obligation towards our country, is valid. It has been a question, whether the state ought to compel its citizens to keep their word towards the enemy? The better opinion is that it should do so; and this has been the practice of the most civilized nations.† Those who put themselves under the protection of a state engage to do nothing hostile towards it. Hence such actions as that of Zopyrus, who betrayed Babylon under the guise of a refugee, are not excusable. Several sorts of tacit engagements are established by the usage of nations, as that of raising a white flag in token of a desire to suspend arms. These are exceptions from the general rule which authorizes deceit in war.‡ In the concluding chapter of the whole treatise Grotius briefly exhorts all states to pre-

* C. 22. † C. 23. ‡ C. 24.

serve good faith and to seek peace at all times, upon the mild principles of Christianity.*

CHAP. IV.

Objections to Grotius made by Paley unreasonable.

146. If the reader has had the patience to make his way through the abstract of Grotius, De Jure Belli, that we have placed before him, he will be fully prepared to judge of the criticisms made upon this treatise by Paley and Dugald Stewart. "The writings of Grotius and Puffendorf," says the former, "are of too forensic a cast, too much mixed up with civil law and with the jurisprudence of Germany, to answer precisely the design of a system of ethics, the direction of private consciences in the general conduct of human life." But it was not the intention of Grotius (we are not at present concerned with Puffendorf) to furnish a system of ethics; nor did any one ever hold forth his treatise in this light. Upon some most important branches of morality he has certainly dwelt so fully as to answer the purpose of "directing the private conscience in the conduct of life." The great aim, however, of his inquiries was to ascertain the principles of natural right applicable to independent communities.

147. Paley, it must be owned, has a more specious ground of accusation in his next charge against Grotius for the profusion of classical quotations. "To any thing more than ornament they can make no claim. To propose them as serious arguments, gravely to attempt to establish or fortify a moral duty by the testimony of a Greek or Roman poet, is to trifle with the reader, or rather take off his attention from all just principles in morals."

* C. 25.

CHAP. IV.

Reply of Mackintosh

148. A late eminent writer has answered this from the text of Grotius, but in more eloquent language than Grotius could have employed. "Another answer," says Mackintosh, "is due to some of those who have criticized Grotius, and that answer might be given in the words of Grotius himself. He was not of such a stupid and servile cast of mind, as to quote the opinions of poets or orators, of historians and philosophers, as those of judges from whose decision there was no appeal. He quotes them, as he tells us himself, as witnesses, whose conspiring testimony, mightily strengthened and confirmed by their discordance on almost every other subject, is a conclusive proof of the unanimity of the whole human race on the great rules of duty and the fundamental principles of morals. On such matters, poets and orators are the most unexceptionable of all witnesses; for they address themselves to the general feelings and sympathies of mankind; they are neither warped by system, nor perverted by sophistry; they can attain none of their objects, they can neither please nor persuade, if they dwell on moral sentiments not in unison with those of their readers. No system of moral philosophy can surely disregard the general feelings of human nature, and the according judgment of all ages and nations. But where are these feelings and that judgment recorded and preserved? In those very writings which Grotius is gravely blamed for having quoted. The usages and laws of nations, the events of history, the opinions of philosophers, the sentiments of orators and poets, as well as the observation of common life are, in truth, the materials out of

which the science of morality is formed; and those who neglect them are justly chargeable with a vain attempt to philosophize without regard to fact and experience, the sole foundation of all true philosophy."*

149. The passage in Grotius which has suggested this noble defence will be found above. It will be seen on reference to it, that he proposes to quote the poets and orators cautiously, and rather as ornamental than authoritative supports of his argument. In no one instance, I believe, will he be found to "enforce a moral duty," as Paley imagines, by their sanction. It is nevertheless to be fairly acknowledged, that he has sometimes gone a good deal farther than the rules of a pure taste allow in accumulating quotations from the poets, and that, in an age so impatient of prolixity as the last, this has stood much in the way of the general reader.

Censures of Stewart.

150. But these criticisms of Paley contain very trifling censure in comparison with the unbounded scorn poured on Grotius by Dugald Stewart, in his first Dissertation on the Progress of Philosophy. I have never read these pages of an author whom I had unfortunately not the opportunity of personally knowing, but whose researches have contributed so much to the delight and advantage of mankind, without pain and surprize. It would be too much to say that, in several parts of this Dissertation, by no means in the first class of Stewart's writings, other proofs of precipitate judgment do not occur; but that he should have

* Mackintosh, Discourse on the Study of the Law of Nature and Nations, p. 23. (edit. 1828.)

spoken of a work so distinguished by fame, and so effective, as he himself admits, over the public mind of Europe, in terms of unmingled depreciation, without having done more than glanced at some of its pages, is an extraordinary symptom of that tendency towards prejudices, hasty but inveterate, of which this eminent man seems to have been not a little susceptible. The attack made by Stewart on those who have taken the law of nature and nations as their theme, and especially on Grotius who stands forward in that list, is protracted for several pages, and it would be tedious to examine every sentence in succession. Were I to do so, it is not, in my opinion, an exaggeration to say that almost every successive sentence would lie open to criticism. But let us take the chief heads of accusation.

Answer to them.

151. "Grotius," we are told, "under the title, De Jure Belli ac Pacis, has aimed at a complete system of natural law. Condillac says, that he chose the title in order to excite a more general curiosity." The total erroneousness of this passage must appear to every one who has seen what Grotius declares to have been his primary object. He chose the title because it came nearest to express that object — the ascertainment of laws binding on independent communities in their mutual relations, whether of war or peace. But as it was not possible to lay down any solid principles of international right till the notions of right, of sovereignty, of dominion over things and persons, of war itself, were clearly established, it became indispensable to build upon a more extensive basis

than later writers on the law of nations, who found the labour performed to their hands, have thought necessary. All ethical philosophy, even in those parts which bear a near relation to jurisprudence and to international law, was in the age of Grotius a chaos of incoherent and arbitrary notions, brought in from various sources, from the antient schools, from the scriptures, the fathers, the canons, the casuistical theologians, the rabbins, the jurists, as well as from the practice and sentiments of every civilized nation, past and present, the Jews, the Greeks and Romans, the trading republics, the chivalrous kingdoms of modern Europe. If Grotius has not wholly disentangled himself from this bewildering maze, through which he painfully traces his way by the lights of reason and revelation, he has at least cleared up much, and put others still oftener in the right path, where he has not been able to follow it. Condillac, as here quoted by Stewart, has anticipated Paley's charge against Grotius, of labouring to support his conclusions by the authority of others, and of producing a long string of quotations to prove the most indubitable propositions. In what degree this very exaggerated remark is true we have already seen. But it should be kept in mind, that neither the disposition of the age in which Grotius lived, nor the real necessity of illustrating every part of his inquiries by the precedent usages of mankind, would permit him to treat of moral philosophy as of the abstract theorems of geometry. If his erudition has sometimes obstructed or misled him, which perhaps has not so frequently happened as these critics assume, it

CHAP. IV.

is still true that a contemptuous ignorance of what has been done or has been taught, such as belonged to the school of Condillac and to that of Paley, does not very well qualify the moral philosopher for inquiry into the principles which are to regulate human nature.

152. "Among the different ideas," Stewart observes, "which have been formed of natural jurisprudence, one of the most common, especially in the earlier systems, supposes its object to be, — to lay down those rules of justice which would be binding on men living in a social state without any positive institutions; or, as it is frequently called by writers on this subject, living together in a state of nature. This idea of the province of jurisprudence seems to have been uppermost in the mind of Grotius in various parts of his treatise." After some conjectures on the motives which led the early writers to take this view of national law, and admitting that the rules of justice are in every case precise and indispensable, and that their authority is altogether independent of that of the civil magistrate, he deems it "obviously absurd to spend much time in speculating about the principles of this natural law, as applicable to men before the institution of governments." It may possibly be as absurd as he thinks it. But where has Grotius shown that this condition of natural society was uppermost in his thoughts? Of the state of nature, as it existed among individuals before the foundation of civil institutions, he says no more than was requisite in order to exhibit the origin of those rights which spring from property and government.

But that he has, in some part especially of his second book, dwelt upon the rules of justice binding on men subsequent to the institution of property, but independently of positive laws, is most certain; nor is it possible for any one to do otherwise, who does not follow Hobbes in confounding moral with legal obligation; a theory to which Mr. Stewart was of all men the most averse.

153. Natural jurisprudence is a term that is not always taken in the same sense. It seems to be of English origin; nor am I certain, though my memory may deceive me, that I have ever met with it in Latin or in French. Strictly speaking, as jurisprudence means the science of law, and is especially employed with respect to the Roman, natural jurisprudence must be the science of morals, or the law of nature. It is therefore, in this sense, co-extensive with ethics, and comprehends the rules of temperance, liberality, and benevolence, as much as those of justice. Stewart, however, seems to consider this idea of jurisprudence as an arbitrary extension of the science derived from the technical phraseology of the Roman law. "Some vague notion of this kind," he says, "has manifestly given birth to many of the digressions of Grotius." It may have been seen by the analysis of the entire treatise of Grotius above given, that none of his digressions, if such they are to be called, have originated in any vague notion of an identity, or proper analogy, between the strict rules of justice and those of the other virtues. The Aristotelian division of justice into commutative and distributive, which Grotius has adopted, might seem in

some respect to bear out this supposition; but it is evident, from the contents of Stewart's observations, that he was referring only to the former species, or justice in its more usual sense, the observance of perfect rights, whose limits may be accurately determined, and whose violation may be redressed.

154. Natural jurisprudence has another sense imposed upon it by Adam Smith. According to this sense, its object, in the words of Stewart, is "to ascertain the general principles of justice which ought to be recognized in every municipal code, and to which it ought to be the aim of every legislator to accommodate his institutions." Grotius, in Smith's opinion, was "the first who attempted to give the world any thing like a system of those principles which ought to run through, and to be the foundation of, the laws of all nations; and his treatise on the laws of peace and war, with all its imperfections, is perhaps at this day the most complete book that has yet been given on the subject."

155. The first probably, in modern times, who conceived this idea of an universal jurisprudence was Lord Bacon. He places among the desiderata of political science, the province of universal justice, or the sources of law. Id nunc agatur, ut fontes justitiæ et utilitatis publicæ petantur, et in singulis juris partibus character quidam et idea justi exhibeatur, ad quem particularium regnorum et rerumpublicarum leges probare, atque inde emendationem moliri quisque, cui hæc cordi erit et curæ possit.* The maxims which follow are an admir-

* De Augmentis, lib. viii.

able illustration of the principles which should regulate the enactment and expression of laws, as well as much that should guide, in a general manner, the decision of courts of justice. They touch very slightly, if at all, any subject which Grotius has handled; but certainly come far closer to natural jurisprudence, in the sense of Smith, inasmuch as they contain principles which have no limitation to the circumstances of particular societies. These maxims of Bacon, and all others that seem properly to come within the province of jurisprudence in this sense, which is now become not uncommon, the science of universal *law*, are resolvible partly into those of natural justice, partly into those of public expediency. Little however could be objected against the admission of universal jurisprudence, in this sense, among the sciences. But if it is meant that any systematic science, whether by the name of jurisprudence or legislation, can be laid down as to the principles which ought to determine the institutions of all nations, or that, in other words, the laws of each separate community ought to be regulated by any universal standard, in matters not depending upon eternal justice, we must demur to receiving so very disputable a proposition. It is probable that Adam Smith had no thoughts of asserting it; yet his language is not very clear, and he seems to have assigned some object to Grotius, distinct from the establishment of natural and international law. "Whether this was" says Stewart "or was not, the leading object of Grotius, it is not material to decide; but if this was his object, it will not

CHAP. IV.

be disputed that he has executed his design in a very desultory manner, and that he often seems to have lost sight of it altogether, in the midst of those miscellaneous speculations on political, ethical, and historical subjects, which form so large a portion of his treatise, and which so frequently succeed each other without any apparent connexion or common aim."

156. The unfairness of this passage it is now hardly incumbent upon me to point out. The reader has been enabled to answer that no political speculation will be found in the volume, De Jure Belli ac Pacis, unless the disquisition on the origin of human society is thus to be denominated; that the instances continually adduced from history are always in illustration of the main argument; and that what are here called ethical speculations are in fact the real subject of the book, since it avowedly treats of obligations on the conscience of mankind, and especially of their rulers. Whether the various topics in this treatise "succeed each other without apparent connexion or common aim," may best be seen by the titles of the chapters, or by the analysis of their contents. There are certainly a very few of these that have little in common, even by deduction or analogy, with international law, though scarce any, I think, which do not rise naturally out of the previous discussion. Exuberances of this kind are so common in writers of great reputation, that where they do not transgress more than Grotius has done, the censure of irrelevancy has been always reckoned hypercritical.

157. "The Roman system of jurisprudence,"

Mr. Stewart proceeds, "seems to have warped in no inconsiderable degree the notions of Grotius on all questions connected with the theory of legislation, and to have diverted his attention from that philosophical idea of law so well expressed by Cicero, Non a prætoris edicto, neque a duodecim tabulis, sed penitus ex intima philosophia hauriendam juris disciplinam. In this idolatry indeed of the Roman law, he has not gone so far as some of his commentators, who have affirmed that it is only a different name for the law of nature: but that his partiality for his professional pursuits has often led him to overlook the immense difference between the state of society in ancient and modern Europe will not, I believe, now be disputed." It is probable that it will be disputed by all who are acquainted with Grotius. The questions connected with the theory of legislation which he has discussed are chiefly those relating to the acquisition and alienation of property in some of the earlier chapters of the second book. That he has not, in these disquisitions, adopted all the determinations of the Roman jurists is certain; whether he may in any particular instance have adhered to them more than the best theory of legislation would admit, is a matter of variable opinion. But Stewart, wholly unacquainted with the civil laws, appears to have much underrated their value. In all questions of private right, they form the great basis of every legislation; and, as all civilized nations, including our own, have derived a large portion of their jurisprudence from this source, so even the

CHAP. IV.

modern theorists, who would disdain to be ranked as disciples of Paullus and Papinian, are not ashamed to be their plagiaries.

Grotius vindicated against Rousseau.

158. It has been thrown out against Grotius by Rousseau *, and the same insinuation may be found in other writers, that he confounds the fact with the right, and the duties of nations with their practice. How little foundation there is for this calumny is sufficiently apparent to our readers. Scrupulous, as a casuist, to an excess hardly reconcilable with the security and welfare of good men, he was the first, beyond the precincts of the confessional or the church, to pour the dictates of a saint-like innocence into the ears of princes. It is true that in recognizing the legitimacy of slavery, and in carrying too far the principles of obedience to government, he may be thought to have deprived mankind of some of their security against injustice, but this is exceedingly different from a sanction to it. An implicit deference to what he took for divine truth was the first axiom in the philosophy of Grotius; if he was occasionally deceived in his application of this principle, it was but according to the notions of his age; but those who wholly reject the authority must of course want a common standard by which his speculations in moral philosophy can be reconciled with their own.

159. I must now quit a subject upon which, perhaps, I have dwelt too long. The high fame of Dugald Stewart has rendered it a sort of duty to vindicate from his hasty censures the memory of one still more illustrious in reputation, till the

* Contrat Social.

lapse of time, and the fickleness of literary fashion, conspired with the popularity of his assailants to magnify his defects, and meet the very name of his famous treatise with a kind of scornful ridicule. That Stewart had never read much of Grotius, or even gone over the titles of his chapters, is very manifest; and he displays a similar ignorance as to the other writers on natural law, who for more than a century afterwards, as he admits himself, exercised a great influence over the studies of Europe. I have commented upon very few, comparatively, of the slips which occur in his pages on this subject.

His arrangement.

160. The arrangement of Grotius has been blamed as unscientific by a more friendly judge, Sir James Mackintosh. Though I do not feel very strongly the force of his objections, it is evident that the law of nature might have been established on its basis, before the author passed forward to any disquisition upon its reference to independent communities. This would have changed a good deal the principal object that Grotius had in view, and brought his treatise, in point of method, very near to that of Puffendorf. But assuming, as he did, the authority recognized by those for whom he wrote, that of the Scriptures, he was less inclined to dwell on the proof which reason affords for a natural law, though fully satisfied of its validity even without reference to the Supreme Being.

His defects.

161. The real faults of Grotius, leading to erroneous determinations, seem to be rather an unnecessary scrupulousness, and somewhat of old

theological prejudice, from which scarce any man in his age, who was not wholly indifferent to religion, had liberated himself. The notes of Barbeyrac seldom fail to correct this leaning. Several later writers on international law have treated his doctrine of an universal law of nations founded on the agreement of mankind, as an empty chimera of his invention. But if he only meant by this the tacit consent, or, in other words, the general custom of civilized nations, it does not appear that there is much difference between his theory and that of Wolf or Vattel.

CHAP. V.

HISTORY OF POETRY FROM 1600 TO 1650.

SECT. I.

ON ITALIAN POETRY.

Characters of the Poets of the Seventeenth Century — Sometimes too much depreciated — Marini — Tassoni — Chiabrera.

CHAP. V.

Low estimation of the Seicentisti.

1. At the close of the sixteenth century, few remained in Italy to whom posterity has assigned a considerable reputation for their poetry. But the ensuing period has stood lower, for the most part, in the opinion of later ages than any other since the revival of letters. The *seicentisti*, the writers of the seventeenth century, were stigmatized in modern criticism, till the word has been associated with nothing but false taste and every thing that should be shunned and despised. Those who had most influence in leading the literary judgment of Italy went back, some almost exclusively to the admiration of Petrarch and his contemporaries, some to the various writers who cultivated their native poetry in the sixteenth century. Salvini is of the former class, Muratori of the latter.*

* Muratori, Della Perfetta Poesia, is one of the best books of criticism in the Italian language; in the second volume are contained some remarks by Salvini, a bigotted Florentine.

CHAP. V.

Not quite so great as formerly.

2. The last age, that is, the concluding twenty years of the eighteenth century, brought with it, in many respects, a change of public sentiment in Italy. A masculine turn of thought, an expanded grasp of philosophy, a thirst, ardent to excess, for great exploits and noble praise, has distinguished the Italian people of the last fifty years from their progenitors of several preceding generations. It is possible that the enhanced relative importance of the Lombards in their national literature, may have not been without its influence in rendering the public taste less fastidious as to purity of language, less fine in that part of æsthetic discernment which relates to the grace and felicity of expression, while it became also more apt to demand originality, nervousness, and the power of exciting emotion. The writers of the seventeenth century may, in some cases, have gained by this revolution; but those of the preceding ages, especially the Petrarchists whom Bembo had led, have certainly lost ground in national admiration.

Praise of them by Rubbi.

3. Rubbi, editor of the voluminous collection, called Parnaso Italiano, had the courage to exto the "scicentisti" for their genius and fancy, and even to place them, in all but style, above their predecessors. "Give them," he says, "but grace and purity, take from them their capricious exaggerations, their perpetual and forced metaphors, you will think Marini the first poet of Italy, and his followers, with their fulness of imagery and personification, will make you forget their monotonous predecessors. I do not advise you to make a study of the seicentisti; it would spoil your

style, perhaps your imagination; I only tell you that they were the true Italian poets; they wanted a good style, it is admitted, but they were so far from wanting genius and imagination, that these perhaps tended to impair their style. * CHAP. V.

Also by Salfi.

4. It is probable that every native critic would think some parts of this panegyric, and especially the strongly hyperbolical praise of Marini, carried too far. But I am not sure that we should be wrong in agreeing with Rubbi, that there is as much *catholic* poetry, by which I mean that which is good in all ages and countries, in some of the minor productions of the seventeenth as in those of the sixteenth age. The sonnets, especially, have more individuality and more meaning. In this, however, I should wish to include the latter portion of the seventeenth century. Salfi, a writer of more taste and judgment than Rubbi, has recently taken the same side, and remarked the superior originality, the more determined individuality, the greater variety of subjects, above all, what the Italians now most value, the more earnest patriotism of the later poets.† Those immediately before us, belonging to the first half of the century, are less numerous than in the former age; the sonnetteers especially have produced much less; and in the collections of poetry, even in that of Rubbi, notwithstanding his eulogy, they take up very little room. Some however have obtained a durable

* Parnaso Italiano, vol. xli. (Avvertimento.) Rubbi, however, gives but two out of his long collection in fifty volumes, to the writers of the seventeenth century.

† Salfi, Hist. Litt. de l'Italie (continuation de Ginguéné), vol. xii. p. 424.

CHAP. V.

renown, and are better known in Europe than any, except the Tassos, that flourished in the last fifty years of the golden age.

Adone of Marini.

5. It must be confessed that the praise of a masculine genius, either in thought or language, cannot be bestowed on the poet of the seventeenth century whom his contemporaries most admired, Giovanni Battista Marini. He is, on the contrary, more deficient than all the rest in such qualities, and is indebted to the very opposite characteristics for the sinister influence he exerted on the public taste. He was a Neapolitan by birth, and gave to the world his famous Adone in 1623. As he was then fifty-four years old, it may be presumed, from the character of the poem, that it was in great part written long before; and he had already acquired a considerable reputation by his other works. The Adone was received with an unbounded and ill-judging approbation; ill-judging in a critical sense, because the faults of this poem are incapable of defence, but not unnatural, as many parallel instances of the world's enthusiasm have shown. No one had before carried the corruption of taste so far; extravagant metaphors, false thoughts and conceits on equivocal words are very frequent in the Adone; and its author stands accountable in some measure for his imitators, who during more than half a century looked up to Marini with emulous folly, and frequently succeeded in greater deviations from pure taste without his imagination and elegance.

Its character.

6. The Adone is one of the longest poems in the world, containing more than 45,000 lines.

He has shown some ingenuity in filling up the canvass of so slight a story by additional incidents from his own invention, and by long episodes allusive to the times in which he lived. But the subject, expanded so interminably, is essentially destitute of any superior interest, and fit only for an enervated people, barren of high thoughts and high actions, the Italy, notwithstanding some bright exceptions, of the seventeenth century. If we could overcome this essential source of weariness, the Adone has much to delight our fancy and our ear. Marini is, more than any other poet, the counterpart of Ovid; his fertility of imagination, his ready accumulation of circumstances and expressions, his easy flow of language, his harmonious versification, are in no degree inferior; his faults are also the same; for in Ovid we have all the overstrained figures and the false conceits of Marini. But the Italian poet was incapable of imitating the truth to nature and depth of feeling which appear in many parts of his ancient prototype, nor has he as vigorous an expression. Never does Marini rise to any high pitch; few stanzas perhaps are remembered by natives for their beauty, but many are graceful and pleasing, all are easy and musical.*

* Five stanzas of the seventh canto, being a choral song of satyrs and bacchanti, are thrown into *sdruccioli*, and have been accounted by the Italians an extraordinary effort of skill, from the difficulty of sustaining a metre which is not strong in rhymes with so much spirit and ease. Each verse also is divided into three parts, themselves separately *sdruccioli*, though not rhyming. One stanza will make this clear:—

Hor d' ellera s' adornino, e di pampino
I giovani, e le vergini più tenere,
E gemina nell' anima si stampino
L' imagine di Libero, e di Venere.

CHAP. V.

"Perhaps," says Salfi, "with the exception of Ariosto, no one has been more a poet by nature than he*;" a praise, however, which may justly seem hyperbolical to those who recal their attention to the highest attributes of poetry.

And popularity.

7. Marini belongs to that very numerous body of poets who, delighted with the spontaneity of their ideas, never reject any that arise; their parental love forbids all preference, and an impartial law of gavelkind shares their page among all the offspring of their brain. Such were Ovid and Lucan, and such have been some of our own poets of great genius and equal fame. Their fertility astonishes the reader, and he enjoys for a time the abundant banquet; but satiety is too sure a consequence, and he returns with less pleasure to a second perusal. The censure of criticism falls invariably, and sometimes too harshly, on this sort of poetry; it is one of those cases where the critic and the world are most at variance; but the world is apt, in this instance, to reverse its own judgment, and yield to the tribunal it had rejected.

Tutti ardano, s' accendano, ed avampino,
Qual Semele, ch' al folgore fù cenere;
E cantino a Cupidine, ed a Bromio,
Con numeri poetici un' encomio. Cant. vii. st. 118.

Though this metrical skill may not be of the highest merit in poetry, it is no more to be slighted than facility of touch in a painter.

* Vol. xiv. p. 147. The character of Marini's poetry which this critic has given, is in general very just, and in good taste. Corniani (vii. 123.) has also done justice, and no more than justice, to Marini. Tiraboschi has hardly said enough in his favour; and as to Muratori, it was his business to restore and maintain a purity of taste, which rendered him severe towards the excesses of such poets as Marini.

"To Marini," says an eminent Italian writer, "we owe the lawlessness of composition: the ebullition of his genius, incapable of restraint, burst through every bulwark, enduring no rule but that of his own humour, which was all for sonorous verse, bold and ingenious thoughts, fantastical subjects, a phraseology rather Latin than Italian, and in short aimed at pleasing by a false appearance of beauty. It would almost pass belief how much this style was admired, were it not so near our own time that we hear as it were the echo of its praise; nor did Dante, or Petrarch, or Tasso, or perhaps any of the ancient poets, obtain in their lives so much applause." * But Marini, who died in 1625, had not time to enjoy much of this glory. The length of this poem, and the diffuseness which produces its length, render it nearly impossible to read through the Adone; and it wants that inequality which might secure a preference to detached portions. The story of Psyche in the fourth canto may perhaps be as fair a specimen of Marini as could be taken: it is not easy to destroy the beauty of that fable, nor was he unfitted to relate it with grace and interest; but he has displayed all the blemishes of his own style.*

* Crescimbeni, ii. 470.

† The Adone has been frequently charged with want of decency. It was put to the ban of the Roman inquisition, and grave writers have deemed it necessary to protest against its licentiousness. Andrès even goes so far as to declare, that no one can read the Adone whose heart as well as taste is not corrupt; and that, both for the sake of good morals and good poetry, it should be taken out of every one's hands. After such invectives, it may seem extraordinary that, though the poem of Marini must by its nature be rather voluptuous, it is by far less open to such an objection than the Orlando Furioso, nor more, I be-

CHAP. V.

Secchia Rapita of Tassoni.

8. The Secchia Rapita of Alessandro Tassoni, published at Paris in 1622, is better known in Europe than might have been expected from its local subject, idiomatic style, and unintelligible personalities. It turns, as the title imports, on one of the petty wars frequent among the Italian cities as late as the beginning of the fourteenth century, wherein the Bolognese endeavoured to recover the bucket of a well, which the citizens of Modena in a prior incursion had carried off. Tassoni, by a poetical anachronism, mixed this with an earlier contest of rather more dignity between the little republics, wherein Enzio, king of Sardinia, a son of Frederic II., had been made prisoner. He has been reckoned by many the inventor, or at least the reproducer in modern times, of the mock heroic style.* Pulci, however, had led the way; and when Tassoni claims originality, it must be in a very limited view of the execution of his poem. He has certainly more of parody than Pulci could have attempted; the great poems of Ariosto and Tasso, especially the latter, supply him with abundant opportunities for this ingenious and lively, but not spiteful,

lieve, than the Faery Queen. No charge is apt to be made so capriciously as this.

* Boileau seems to acknowledge himself indebted to Tassoni for the Lutrin; and Pope may have followed both in the first sketch of the Rape of the Lock, though what he has added is a purely original conception. But in fact the mock-heroic or burlesque style, in a general sense, is so natural, and moreover so common, that it is idle to talk of its inventor. What else is Rabelais, Don Quixote, or, in Italian, the romance of Bertoldo, all older than Tassoni? What else are the popular tales of children, John the Giganticide, and many more? The poem of Tassoni had a very great reputation. Voltaire did it injustice, though it was much in his own line.

exercise of wit, and he has adroitly seized the ridiculous side of his contemporary Marini. The combat of the cities, it may be observed, is serious enough, however trifling the cause, and has its due proportion of slaughter; but Tassoni, very much in the manner of the Morgante Maggiore, throws an air of ridicule over the whole. The episodes are generally in a still more comic style. A graceful facility and a light humour, which must have been incomparably better understood by his countrymen and contemporaries, make this a very amusing poem. It is exempt from the bad taste of the age; and the few portions where the burlesque tone disappears are versified with much elegance. Perhaps it has not been observed, that the count de Culagne, one of his most ludicrous characters, bears a certain resemblance to Hudibras, both by his awkward and dastardly appearance as a knight, and by his ridiculous addresses to the lady whom he woos.* None, however, will question the originality of Butler.

Chiabrera.

9. But the poet of whom Italy has, in later times, been far more proud than of Marini or Tassoni was Chiabrera. Of his long life the greater part fell within the sixteenth century; and some of his poems were published before its close; but he has generally been considered as belonging to the present period. Chiabrera is the founder of a school in the lyric poetry of Italy, rendered afterwards more famous by Guidi, which affected the

* Cantos X. and XI. It was intended as a ridicule on Marini, but represents a real personage. Salfi, xiii. 147.

CHAP. V.

name of Pindaric. It is the Theban lyre which they boast to strike: it is from the fountain of Dirce that they draw their inspiration; and these allusions are as frequent in their verse, as those to Valclusa and the Sorga in the followers of Petrarch. Chiabrera borrowed from Pindar that grandeur of sound, that pomp of epithets, that rich swell of imagery, that unvarying majesty of conception, which distinguish the odes of both poets. He is less frequently harsh or turgid, though the latter blemish has been sometimes observed in him, but wants also the masculine condensation of his prototype; nor does he deviate so frequently, or with so much power of imagination, into such digressions as those which generally shade from our eyes, in a skilful profusion of ornament, the victors of the Grecian games whom Pindar professes to celebrate. The poet of the house of Medici and of other princes of Italy, great at least in their own time, was not so much compelled to desert his immediate subject, as he who was paid for an ode by some wrestler or boxer, who could only become worthy of heroic song by attaching his name to the ancient glories of his native city. The profuse employment of mythological allusions, frigid as it appears at present, was so customary, that we can hardly impute to it much blame; and it seemed peculiarly appropriate to a style which was studiously formed on the Pindaric model.* The odes of Chiabrera

* Salfi justifies the continual introduction of mythology by the Italian poets, on the ground that it was a part of their national inheritance, associated with the monuments and recollections of their glory. This would be more to the purpose if this mythology had not been almost exclusively Greek. But perhaps all that was of clas-

are often panegyrical, and his manner was well fitted for that style, though sometimes we have ceased to admire those whom he extols. But he is not eminent for purity of taste, nor, I believe, of Tuscan language: he endeavoured to force the idiom, more than it would bear, by constructions and inventions borrowed from the ancient tongues; and these odes, splendid and noble as they are, bear in the estimation of critics some marks of the seventeenth century.* The satirical epistles of Chiabrera are praised by Salfi as written in a moral Horatian tone, abounding with his own experience and allusions to his time.† But in no other kind of poetry has he been so highly successful as in the lyric; and, though the Grecian robe is never cast away, he imitated Anacreon with as much skill as Pindar. "His lighter odes," says Crescimbeni, "are most beautiful and elegant, full of grace, vivacity, spirit, and delicacy, adorned with pleasing inventions, and differing in nothing but language from those of Anacreon. His dithyrambics I hold incapable of being excelled, all the qualities required in such compositions being united with a certain nobleness of expression which elevates all it touches upon."‡

10. The greatest lyric poet of Greece was not more the model of Chiabrera than his Roman competitor was of Testi. "Had he been more attentive to the choice of his expression," says Crescimbeni, "he might have earned the name of the Tuscan Horace." The faults of his age are said to be

sical antiquity might be blended in their sentiments with the memory of Rome.

* Salfi, xii. 250.

† Id. xiii. 2012.

‡ Storia della volgar poesia, ii. 483.

CHAP. V.

frequently discernible in Testi; but there is, to an ordinary reader, an Horatian elegance, a certain charm of grace and ease in his canzoni, which render them pleasing. One of these, beginning, Ruscelletto orgoglioso, is highly admired by Muratori, the best, perhaps, of the Italian critics, and one not slow to censure any defects of taste. It apparently alludes to some enemy in the court of Modena.* The character of Testi was ambitious and restless, his life spent in seeking and partly in enjoying public offices, but terminated in prison. He had taken, says a later writer, Horace for his model; and perhaps like him he wished to appear sometimes a stoic, sometimes an epicurean; but he knew not like him how to profit by the lessons either of Zeno or Epicurus, so as to lead a tranquil and independent life.†

His followers.

11. The imitators of Chiabrera were generally unsuccessful; they became hyperbolical and exaggerated. The translation of Pindar by Alessandro Adimari, though not very much resembling the original, has been praised for its own beauty. But these poets are not to be confounded with the Marinists, to whom they are much superior. Ciampoli, whose Rime were published in 1628, may perhaps be the best after Chiabrera.‡ Several obscure epic poems, some of which are rather to be deemed romances, are commemorated by the last historian of Italian literature. Among these is the Conquest of Granada by Graziani, published

* This canzon is in Matthias, Componimenti Lirici, ii. 190.

† Salfi, xii. 281.

‡ Id. p. 303. Tiraboschi, xi. 364. Baillet, on the authority of others, speaks less honourably of Ciampoli. N. 1451.

in 1650. Salfi justly observes that the subject is truly epic; but the poem itself seems to be nothing but a series of episodical intrigues without unity. The style, according to the same writer, is redundant, the similes too frequent and monotonous; yet he prefers it to all the heroic poems which had intervened since that of Tasso.*

SECT. II.

ON SPANISH POETRY.

Romances — The Argensolas — Villegas — Gongora, and his School.

12. THE Spanish poetry of the sixteenth century might be arranged in three classes. In the first we might place that which was formed in the ancient school, though not always preserving its characteristics; the short trochaic metres, employed in the song or the ballad, altogether national, or aspiring to be such, either in its subjects or in its style. In the second would stand that to which the imitation of the Italians had given rise, the school of Boscan and Garcilasso; and with these we might place also the epic poems which do not seem to be essentially different from similar productions of Italy. A third and not inconsiderable division, though less extensive than the others, is composed of the poetry of good sense; the didactic, semi-satirical, Horatian style, of which Mendoza was the

The styles of Spanish poetry.

* Id. vol. xiii. p. 94—129.

CHAP. V.

founder, and several specimens of which occur in the Parnaso Español of Sedano.

The romances.

13. The romances of the Cid and many others are referred by the most competent judges to the reign of Philip III.* These are by no means among the best of Spanish romances, and we should naturally expect that so artificial a style as the imitation of ancient manners and sentiments by poets in wholly a different state of society, though some men of talent might succeed in it, would soon degenerate into an affected mannerism. The Italian style continued to be cultivated: under Philip III., the decline of Spain in poetry, as in arms and national power, was not so striking as afterwards. Several poets belong to the age of that prince, and even that of Philip IV. was not destitute of men of merited reputation.† Among the best were two

* Duran, Romançero de romances doctrinales, amatorios, festivos, &c. 1829. The Moorish romances, with a few exceptions, and those of the Cid, are ascribed by this author to the latter part of the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth century. In the preface to a former publication, Romances Moriscos, this writer has said, Così todos los romances que publicamos en este libro pertenecen al siglo 16mo, y algunos pocos a principio del 17m. Los autores son desconoscidos, pero sus obras han llegado, y merecido llegar à la posteridad. It seems manifest from internal evidence, without critical knowledge of the language, that those relating to the Cid are not of the middle ages, though some seem still inclined to give them a high antiquity. It is not sufficient to say that the language has been modernised; the whole structure of these ballads is redolent of a low age; and if the Spanish critics agree in this, I know not why foreigners should strive against them.

† Antonio bestows unbounded praise on a poem of the epic class, the Bernardo of Balbuena, published at Madrid in 1624, though he complains that in his own age it lay hid in the corners of booksellers' shops. Balbuena, in his opinion, has left all Spanish poets far behind him. The subject of his poem is the very common fable of Roncesvalles. Dieze, a more judicious and reasonable critic than Antonio, while he denies this absolute pre-eminence of Balbuena, gives him a respectable place among the many epic writers of Spain. But I do not find him mentioned in Bouterwek; in fact most of

The brothers Argensola.

brothers, Lupercio and Bartholomew Argensola. These were chiefly distinguished in what I have called the third or Horatian manner of Spanish poetry, though they by no means confined themselves to any peculiar style. "Lupercio," says Bouterwek, "formed his style after Horace with no less assiduity than Luis de Leon; but he did not possess the soft enthusiasm of that pious poet, who in the religious spirit of his poetry is so totally unlike Horace. An understanding at once solid and ingenious, subject to no extravagant illusion, yet full of true poetic feeling, and an imagination more plastic than creative, impart a more perfect Horatian colouring to the odes, as well as to the canciones and sonnets of Lupercio. He closely imitated Horace in his didactic satires, a style of composition in which no Spanish poet had preceded him. But he never succeeded in attaining the bold combination of ideas which characterizes the ode style of Horace; and his conceptions have therefore seldom any thing like the Horatian energy. On the other hand, all his poems express no less precision of language than the models after which he formed his style. His odes, in particular, are characterized by a picturesque tone of expression which he seems to have imbibed from Virgil rather than from Horace. The extravagant metaphors by which some of Herrera's odes are deformed were uniformly avoided by Lupercio."* The genius of Bartholomew Ar-

these poems are very scarce, and are treasures for the bibliomaniacs.

* Hist. of Spanish Literature, p. 396.

CHAP. V.

gensola was very like that of his brother, nor are their writings easily distinguishable; but Bouterwek assigns on the whole a higher place to Bartholomew. Dieze inclines to the same judgment, and thinks the eulogy of Nicolas Antonio on these brothers, extravagant as it seems, not beyond their merits.

Villegas.

14. But another poet, Manuel Estevan de Villegas, whose poems written in very early youth, entitled Amatorias or Eroticas, were published in 1620, has attained a still higher reputation, especially in other parts of Europe. Dieze calls him "one of the best lyric poets of Spain, excellent in the various styles he has employed, but above all in his odes and songs. His original poems are full of genius; his translations of Horace and Anacreon might often pass for original. Few surpass him in harmony of verse; he is the Spanish Anacreon, the poet of the Graces."* Bouterwek, a more discriminating judge than Dieze, who is perhaps rather valuable for research than for taste, has observed that "the graceful luxuriance of the poetry of Villegas has no parallel in modern literature; and generally speaking, no modern writer has so well succeeded in blending the spirit of ancient poetry with the modern. But constantly to observe that correctness of ideas, which distinguished the classical compositions of antiquity, was by Villegas, as by most Spanish poets, considered too rigid a requisition, and an unnecessary restraint on genius. He accordingly sometimes degenerates into conceits and images, the monstrous absurdity of which are characteristic of the

* Geschichte der Spanischen Dichtkunst, p. 210.

author's nation and age. For instance, in one of his odes in which he entreats Lyda to suffer her tresses to flow, he says that 'agitated by Zephyr, her locks would occasion a thousand deaths, and subdue a thousand lives;' and then he adds, in a strain of extravagance, surpassing that of the Marinists, 'that the sun himself would cease to give light, if he did not snatch beams from her radiant countenance to illumine the east.' But faults of this glaring kind are by no means frequent in the poetry of Villegas, and the fascinating grace with which he emulates his models, operates with so powerful a charm, that the occasional occurrence of some little affectations, from which he could scarcely be expected entirely to abstain, is easily overlooked by the reader."*

Quevedo.

15. Quevedo, who having borne the sur-name of Villegas, has sometimes been confounded with the poet we have just named, is better known in Europe for his prose than his verse; but he is the author of numerous poems both serious and comic or satirical. The latter are by much the more esteemed of the two. He wrote burlesque poetry with success, but it is frequently unintelligible except to natives. In satire he adopted the Juvenalian style.† A few more might be added, perhaps, especially Espinel, a poet of the classic school, Borja of Esquillace, once viceroy of Peru, who is called by Bouterwek the last representative of that style in Spain, but more worthy of praise for withstanding the bad taste of his contemporaries than for any

* Bouterwek, i. 479.

† Id. p. 468.

vigour of genius, and Christopher de la Mena.* No Portuguese poetry about this time seems to be worthy of notice in European literature, though Manuel Faria y Sousa and a few more might attain a local reputation by sonnets and other amatory verse.

Defects of taste in Spanish verse.

16. The original blemish of Spanish writing both in prose and verse had been an excess of effort to say every thing in an unusual manner, a deviation from the beaten paths of sentiment and language in a wider curve than good taste permits. Taste is the presiding faculty which regulates, in all works within her jurisdiction, the struggling powers of imagination, emotion, and reason. Each has its claim to mingle in the composition; each may sometimes be allowed in a great measure to predominate; and a phlegmatic application of what men call common sense in æsthetic criticism is almost as repugnant to its principles as a dereliction of all reason for the sake of fantastic absurdity. Taste also must determine, by an intuitive sense of right somewhat analogous to that which regulates the manners of polished life, to what extent the most simple, the most obvious, the most natural, and therefore, in a popular meaning, the most true, is to be modified by a studious introduction of the new, the striking and the beautiful, so that neither what is insipid and trivial, nor yet what is forced and affected may displease us. In Spain, as we have observed, the latter was always the prevailing fault. The public taste had been formed on bad

* Bouterwek, p. 488.

models, on the Oriental poetry, metaphorical beyond all perceptible analogy, and on that of the Provençals, false in sentiment, false in conception, false in image and figure. The national character, proud, swelling and ceremonious, conspired to give an inflated tone; it was also grave and sententious rather than lively or delicate, and therefore fond of a strained and ambitious style. These vices of writing are carried to excess in romances of chivalry, which became ridiculous in the eyes of sensible men, but were certainly very popular; they affect also, though in a different manner, much of the Spanish prose of the sixteenth century, and they belong to a great deal of the poetry of that age, though it must be owned that much appears wholly exempt from them, and written in a very pure and classical spirit. Cervantes strove by example and by precept to maintain good taste; and some of his contemporaries took the same line.* But they had to fight against the predominant turn of their nation, which soon gave the victory to one of the worst manners of writing that ever disgraced public favour.

Pedantry and far-fetched allusions.

17. Nothing can be more opposite to what is strictly called a classical style, or one formed upon the best models of Greece and Rome, than pedantry. This was nevertheless the weed that overspread the face of literature in those ages when Greece and Rome were the chief objects of veneration. Without an intimate discernment of their beauty it

* Cervantes, in his Viage del Parnaso, praises Gongora, and even imitates his style; but this, Dieze says, is all ironical. Gesch. der Dichtkunst, p. 250.

CHAP. V.

was easy to copy allusions that were no longer intelligible, to counterfeit trains of thought that belonged to past times, to force reluctant idioms into modern form, as some are said to dress after a lady for whom nature has done more than for themselves. From the revival of letters downwards this had been more or less observable in the learned men of Europe, and after that class grew more extensive, in the current literature of modern languages. Pedantry which consisted in unnecessary, and perhaps unintelligible, references to ancient learning, was afterwards combined with other artifices to obtain the same end, far-fetched metaphors and extravagant conceits. The French versifyers of the latter end of the sixteenth century were eminent in both, as the works of Ronsard and Du Bartas attest. We might indeed take the Creation of Du Bartas more properly than the Euphues of our English Lilly, which though very affected and unpleasing, does hardly such violence to common speech and common sense, for the prototype of the style which, in the early part of the seventeenth century, became popular in several countries, but especially in Spain, through the misplaced labours of Gongora.

Gongora.

18. Luis de Gongora, a man of very considerable talents, and capable of writing well, as he has shown, in different styles of poetry, was unfortunately led by an ambitious desire of popularity to introduce one which should render his name immortal, as it has done in a mode which he did not design. This was his *estilo culto*, as it was usually called, or highly polished phraseology, wherein

every word seems to have been out of its natural place. "In fulfilment of this object," says Bouterwek, "he formed for himself with the most laborious assiduity, a style as uncommon as affected, and opposed to all the ordinary rules of the Spanish language, either in prose or verse. He particularly endeavoured to introduce into his native tongue the intricate constructions of the Greek and Latin, though such an arrangement of words had never been attempted in Spanish composition. He consequently found it necessary to invent a particular system of punctuation, in order to render the sense of his verses intelligible. Not satisfied with this patch-work kind of phraseology, he affected to attach an extraordinary depth of meaning to each word, and to diffuse an air of superior dignity over his whole style. In Gongora's poetry the most common words received a totally new signification; and in order to impart perfection to his *estilo culto*, he summoned all his mythological learning to his aid." * "Gongora," says an English writer, "was the founder of a sect in literature. The style called in Castilian *cultismo* owes its origin to him. This affectation consists in using language so pedantic, metaphors so strained, and constructions so involved, that few readers have the knowledge requisite to understand the words, and still fewer ingenuity to discover the allusion, or patience to unravel the sentences. These authors do not avail themselves

* Bouterwek, p. 434.

CHAP. V.

of the invention of letters for the purpose of conveying but of concealing their ideas." *

The schools formed by him.

19. The Gongorists formed a strong party in literature, and carried with them the public voice. If we were to believe some writers of the seventeenth century, he was the greatest poet of Spain.† The age of Cervantes was over, nor was there vitality enough in the criticism of the reign of Philip IV. to resist the contagion. Two sects soon appeared among these *cultoristos;* one who retained that name, and like their master, affected a certain precision of style; another, called *conceptistos*, which went still greater lengths in extravagance, desirous only of expressing absurd ideas in unnatural language.‡ The prevalence of such a disease, for no other analogy can so fitly be used, would seem to have been a bad presage for Spain; but in fact, like other diseases, it did but make the tour of Europe, and rage worse in some countries than in others. It had spent itself in France, when it was at its height in Italy and England. I do not perceive the close connexion of the *estilo culto* of Gongora with that of Marini, whom both Bouterwek and Lord Holland suppose to have formed his own taste on the Spanish school. It seems rather too severe an imputation on that most ingenious and fertile poet, who, as has

* Lord Holland's Lope de Vega, p. 64.

† Dieze, p. 250. Nicolas Antonio, to the disgrace of his judgment, maintains this with the most extravagant eulogy on Gongora; and Baillet copies him; but the next age unhesitatingly reversed the sentence. The Portuguese have laid claim to the estilo culto as their property, and one of their writers who practises it, Manuel de Faria y Sousa, gives Don Sebastian the credit of having been the first who wrote it in prose.

‡ Bouterwek, p. 438.

already been observed, has no fitter parallel than Ovid. The strained metaphors of the Adone are easily collected by critics, and seem extravagant in juxtaposition, but they recur only at intervals; while those of Gongora are studiously forced into every line, and are besides incomparably more refined and obscure. His style indeed seems to be like that of Lycophron, without the excuse of that prophetical mystery, which breathes a certain awfulness over the symbolic language of the Cassandra. Nor am I convinced that our own metaphysical poetry in the reigns of James and Charles, had much to do with either Marini or Gongora, except as it bore marks of the same vice, a restless ambition to excite wonder by overstepping the boundaries of nature.

SECT. III.

Malherbe — Regnier — Other French Poets.

20. MALHERBE, a very few of whose poems belong to the last century, but the greater part to the first twenty years of the present, gave a polish and a grace to the lyric poetry of France which has rendered his name celebrated in her criticism. The public taste of that country is (or I should rather say, used to be) more intolerant of defects in poetry than rigorous in its demands of excellence. Malherbe therefore, who substituted a regular and accurate versification, a style pure and generally

Malherbe.

CHAP. V.

free from pedantic or colloquial phrases, and a sustained tone of what were reckoned elevated thoughts, for the more unequal strains of the sixteenth century, acquired a reputation which may lead some of his readers to disappointment. And this is likely to be increased by a very few lines of great beauty which are known by heart. These stand too much alone in his poems. In general, we find in them neither imagery nor sentiment that yield us delight. He is less mythological, less affected, less given to frigid hyperboles than his predecessors, but far too much so for any one accustomed to real poetry. In the panegyrical odes Malherbe displays some felicity and skill; the poet of kings and courtiers, he wisely perhaps wrote, even when he could have written better, what kings and courtiers would understand and reward. Polished and elegant, his lines seldom pass the conventional tone of poetry; and while he is never original he is rarely impressive. Malherbe may stand in relation to Horace as Chiabrera does to Pindar: the analogy is not very close; but he is far from deficient in that calm philosophy which forms the charm of the Roman poet, and we are willing to believe that he sacrificed his time reluctantly to the praises of the great. It may be suspected that he wrote verses for others; a practice not unusual, I believe, among these courtly rhymers; at least his Alcandre seems to be Henry IV., Chrysanthe or Oranthe the Princess of Condé. He seems himself in some passages to have affected gallantry towards Mary of Medicis, which at that time was not reckoned an im-

pertinence. It is hardly perhaps worth mentioning that Malherbe uses lines of an uneven number of syllables; an innovation, as I believe it was, that has had no success.

Criticisms upon his poetry.

21. Bouterwek has criticized Malherbe with some justice, but with greater severity.* He deems him no poet, which in a certain sense is surely true. But we narrow our definition of poetry too much, when we exclude from it the versification of good sense and select diction. This may probably be ascribed to Malherbe; though Bouhours, an acute and somewhat rigid critic, has pointed out some passages which he deems nonsensical. Another writer of the same age, Rapin, whose own taste was not very glowing, observes that there is much prose in Malherbe; and that, well as he merits to be called correct, he is a little too desirous of appearing so, and often becomes frigid.† Boileau has extolled him, perhaps, somewhat too highly, and La Harpe is inclined to the same side; but in the modern state of French criticism, the danger is that the Malherbes will be too much depreciated.

Satires of Regnier.

22. The satires of Regnier have been highly praised by Boileau, a competent judge, no doubt, in such matters. Some have preferred Regnier even to himself, and found in this old Juvenal of France a certain stamp of satirical genius which

* Vol. v. p. 238.

† Réflexions sur la Poetique, p. 147. Malherbe a ésté le premier qui nous a remis dans le bon chemin, joignant la purité au grand style; mais comme il commença cette manière, il ne put la porter jusques dans sa perfection; il y a bien de la prose dans ses vers. In another place he says, Malherbe est exact et correct; mais il ne hazarde rien, et par l'envie qu'il a d'être trop sage, il est souvent froid. p. 209.

CHAP. V.

the more polished critic wanted.* These satires are unlike all other French poetry of the age of Henry IV.; the tone is vehement, somewhat rugged and coarse, and reminds us a little of his contemporaries Hall and Donne, whom however he will generally and justly be thought much to excel. Some of his satires are borrowed from Ovid or from the Italians.† They have been called gross and licentious; but this only applies to one, the rest are unexceptionable. Regnier, who had probably some quarrel with Malherbe, speaks with contempt of his elaborate polish. But the taste of France, and especially of that highly cultivated nobility who formed the court of Louis XIII. and his son, no longer endured the rude though sometimes animated versification of the older poets. Next to Malherbe in reputation stood Racan and Maynard, both more or less of his school. Of these it was said by their master that Racan wanted the diligence of Maynard, as Maynard did the spirit of Racan, and that a good poet might be made out of the two.‡ A foreigner will in general prefer the former, who seems to have possessed more imagination and sensibility, and a keener relish for rural beauty. Maynard's verses, according to Pelisson, have an ease and elegance that few can imitate, which proceeds from his natural and simple construction.§ He had more success in epigram than in his sonnets, which Boileau has

Racan — Maynard.

* Bouterwek, p. 246. La Harpe. Biogr. Univ.

† Niceron, xi. 397.

‡ Pelisson, Hist. de l'Académie, i. 260. Baillet, Jugemens des Savans (Poetes), n. 1510. La Harpe Cours de Littérature. Bouterwek v. 260.

§ Iidem.

treated with little respect. Nor does he speak better of Malleville, who chose no other species of verse, but seldom produced a finished piece, though not deficient in spirit and delicacy. Viaud, more frequently known by the name of Theophile, a writer of no great elevation of style, is not destitute of imagination. Such at least is the opinion of Rapin and Bouterwek.*

23. The poems of Gombauld were, in general, published before the middle of the century; his epigrams which are most esteemed, in 1657. These are often lively and neat. But a style of playfulness and gaiety had been introduced by Voiture. French poetry under Ronsard and his school, and even that of Malherbe, had lost the lively tone of Marot, and became serious almost to severity. Voiture, with an apparent ease and grace, though without the natural air of the old writers, made it once more amusing. In reality, the style of Voiture is artificial and elaborate, but, like his imitator Prior among us, he has the skill to disguise this from the reader. He must be admitted to have had, in verse as well as prose, a considerable influence over the taste of France. He wrote to please women, and women are grateful when they are pleased. Sarrazin, says his biographer, though less celebrated than Voiture, deserves perhaps to be rated above him; with equal ingenuity, he is far more natural.† The German historian of French literature has spoken less respectfully of Sarrazin, whose verses

Voiture.

Sarrazin.

* Bouterwek, 252. Rapin says, Théophile a l'imagination grande et le sens petit. Il a des hardiesses heureuses à force de se permettre tout. Réflexions sur la Poetique, p. 209.

† Biogr. Univ. Baillet, n. 1532.

CHAP. V.

are the most insipid rhymed prose, such as he not unhappily calls *toilet-poetry.** This is a style which finds little mercy on the right bank of the Rhine; but the French are better judges of the merit of Sarrazin.

SECT. IV.

Rise of Poetry in Germany — Opitz and his followers — Dutch Poets.

Low state of German literature.

24. THE German language had never been more despised by the learned and the noble than at the beginning of the seventeenth century, which seems to be the lowest point in its native literature. The capacity was not wanting; many wrote Latin verse with success; the collection made by Gruter is abundant in these cultivators of a foreign tongue, several of whom belong to the close of the preceding age. But among these it is said that whoever essayed to write their own language did but fail, and the instances adduced are very few. The upper ranks began about this time to speak French in common society; the burghers, as usual, strove to imitate them, and what was far worse, it became the mode to intermingle French words with German, not singly and sparingly, as has happened in other times and countries, but in a jargon affectedly pie-bald and macaronic. Some hope might have

Literary Societies.

* Bouterwek, v. 256. Specimens of all these poets will be found in the collection of Auguis, vol. vi.: and I must own, that, with the exceptions of Malherbe, Regnier and one or two more, my own acquaintance with them extends little farther.

been founded on the literary academies, which, in emulation of Italy, sprung up in this period. The oldest is The Fruitful Society, (die fruchtbringende Gesellschaft) known also as the order of Palms, established at Weimar in 1617.* Five princes enrolled their names at the beginning. It held forth the laudable purpose of purifying and correcting the mother tongue and of promoting its literature, after the manner of the Italian academies. But it is not unusual for literary associations to promise much and fail of performance; one man is more easily found to lay down a good plan, than many to co-operate in its execution. Probably this was merely the scheme of some more gifted individual, perhaps Werder, who translated Ariosto and Tasso†; for little good was effected by the institution. Nor did several others which at different times in the seventeenth century arose over Germany, deserve more praise. They copied the academies of Italy in their quaint names and titles, in their bye-laws, their petty ceremonials and symbolic distinctions, to which, as we always find in these self-elected societies, they attached vast importance, and thought themselves superior to the world by doing nothing for it. "They are gone," exclaims Bouterwek, "and have left no clear vestige of their existence." Such had been the meister-singers before them, and little else in effect were the Academies, in a more genial soil, of their own age. Notwithstanding this, though I am compelled to follow the historian of German literature,

* Bouterwek, x. 35.

† Id. p. 29.

CHAP. V.

it must strike us that these societies seem to manifest a public esteem for something intellectual, which they knew not precisely how to attain; and it is to be observed that several of the best poets in the seventeenth century belonged to them.

Opitz.

25. A very small number of poets, such as Meckerlin and Spee, in the early part of the seventeenth century, though with many faults in point of taste, have been commemorated by the modern historians of literature. But they were wholly eclipsed by one whom Germany regards as the founder of her poetic literature, Martin Opitz, a native of Silesia, honoured with a laurel crown by the emperor in 1628, and raised to offices of distinction and trust in several courts. The national admiration of Opitz seems to have been almost enthusiastic; yet Opitz was far from being the poet of enthusiasm. Had he been such his age might not have understood him. His taste was French and Dutch; two countries of which the poetry was pure and correct but not imaginative. No great elevation, no energy of genius will be found in this German Heinsius and Malherbe. Opitz displayed, however, another kind of excellence. He wrote the language with a purity of idiom, in which Luther alone, whom he chose as his model, was superior; he gave more strength to the versification, and paid a regard to the collocation of syllables according to their quantity, or length of time required for articulation, which the earlier poets had neglected. He is therefore reckoned the inventor of a rich and harmonious rhythm; and he also rendered the Alexandrine verse much more com-

mon than before.* His verse is good; he writes as one conversant with the ancients, and with mankind; if he is too didactic and learned for a poet in the higher sense of the word, if his taste appears fettered by the models he took for imitation, if he even retarded, of which we can hardly be sure, the development of a more genuine nationality in German literature, he must still be allowed, in a favourable sense, to have made an epoch in its history.†

His followers.

26. Opitz is reckoned the founder of what was called the first Silesian school, rather so denominated from him than as determining the birthplace of its poets. They were chiefly lyric, but more in the line of songs and short effusions in trochaic metre than of the regular ode, and sometimes display much spirit and feeling. The German song always seems to bear a resemblance to the

* Bouterwek (p. 94.) thinks this no advantage; a rhymed prose in Alexandrines overspread the German literature of the seventeenth and first part of the eighteenth century.

† Bouterwek, x. 89—119, has given an elaborate critique of the poetry of Opitz. "He is the father, not of German poetry, but of the modern German language of poetry, der neueren deutschen dichtersprache. p. 93. The fame of Opitz spread beyond his country, little as his language was familiar. Non periit Germania, Grotius writes to him, in 1631, Opiti doctissime, quæ te habet locupletissimum testem, quid lingua Germanica, quid ingenia Germanica valeant. Epist. 272. And afterwards, in 1638, thanking him for the present of his translation of the psalms: Dignus erat rex poeta interprete Germanorum poetarum rege; nihil enim tibi blandiens dico; ita sentio à te primum Germanicæ poesi formam datam et habitum quo cum aliis gentibus possit contendere. Ep. 999. Baillet observes, that Opitz passes for the best of German poets, and the first who gave rules to that poetry, and raised it to the state it had since reached; so that he is rather to be accounted its father than its improver. Jugemens des Savans (Poëtes), n. 1436. But reputation is transitory; though ten editions of the poems of Opitz were published within the seventeenth century, which Bouterwek thinks much for Germany at that time, though it would not be so much in some countries, scarce any one, except the lovers of old literature, now asks for these obsolete productions. p. 90.

CHAP. V.

English; the identity of metre and rhythm conspires with what is more essential, a certain analogy of sentiment. Many, however, of Opitz's followers, like himself, took Holland for their Parnassus, and translated their songs from Dutch. Fleming was distinguished by a genuine feeling for lyric poetry; he made Opitz his model, but had he not died young, would probably have gone beyond him, being endowed by nature with a more poetical genius. Gryph, or Gryphius, who belonged to the Fruitful Society, and bore in that the surname of the immortal, with faults that strike the reader in every page, is also superior in fancy and warmth to Opitz. But Gryph is better known in German literature by his tragedies. The hymns of the Lutheran church are by no means the lowest form of German poetry. They have been the work of every age since the reformation; but Dach and Gerhard, who, especially the latter, excelled in these devotional songs, lived about the middle of the seventeenth century. The shade of Luther seemed to protect the church from the profanation of bad taste; or, as we should rather say, it was the intense theopathy of the German nation, and the simple majesty of their ecclesiastical music.*

Dutch poetry.

27. It has been the misfortune of the Dutch, a great people, a people fertile of men of various ability and erudition, a people of scholars, of theologians and philosophers, of mathematicians, of historians, of painters, and, we may add, of poets, that these last have been the mere violets of the shade, and have peculiarly suffered by the narrow

* Bouterwek, x. 218. Eichhorn, iv. 888.

limits within which their language has been spoken or known. The Flemish dialect of the southern Netherlands might have contributed to make up something like a national literature, extensive enough to be respected in Europe, if those provinces, which now affect the somewhat ridiculous name of Belgium, had been equally fertile of talents with their neighbours.

Spiegel.

28. The golden age of Dutch literature is this first part of the seventeenth century. Their chief poets are Spiegel, Hooft, Cats, and Vondel. The first, who has been styled the Dutch Ennius, died in 1612: his principal poem, of an ethical kind, is posthumous, but may probably have been written towards the close of the preceding century. "The style is vigorous and concise; it is rich in imagery and powerfully expressed, but is deficient in elegance and perspicuity."* Spiegel had rendered much service to his native tongue, and was a member of a literary academy which published a Dutch grammar in 1584. Coornhert and Dousa, with others known to fame, were his colleagues; and be it remembered to the honour of Holland, that in Germany, or England, or even in France, there was as yet no institution of this kind. But as Holland at the end of the sixteenth century, and for many years afterwards, was preeminently the literary country of Europe, it is not surprising that some endeavours were made, though unsuccessfully as to European renown, to cultivate the native language. This language is also more soft, though less sonorous than the German.

* Biogr. Univ.

CHAP. V.

Hooft. Cats. Vondel.

29. Spiegel was followed by a more celebrated poet, Peter Hooft, who gave sweetness and harmony to Dutch verse. "The great creative power of poetry," it has been said, "he did not possess; but his language is correct, his style agreeable, and he did much to introduce a better epoch."* His amatory and anacreontic lines have never been excelled in the language; and Hooft is also distinguished both as a dramatist and an historian. He has been called the Tacitus of Holland. But here again his praises must by the generality be taken upon trust. Cats is a poet of a different class; ease, abundance, simplicity, clearness, and purity are the qualities of his style: his imagination is gay, his morality popular and useful. No one was more read than Father Cats, as the people call him; but he is often trifling and monotonous. Cats, though he wrote for the multitude, whose descendants still almost know his poems by heart, was a man whom the republic held in high esteem; twice ambassador in England, he died great pensionary of Holland, in 1651. Vondel, a native of Cologne, but the glory, as he is deemed, of Dutch poetry, was best known as a tragedian. In his tragedies, the lyric part, the choruses which he retained after the ancient model, have been called the sublimest of odes. But some have spoken less highly of Vondel.†

Danish poetry.

30. Denmark had no literature in the native language, except a collection of old ballads, full

* Biogr. Univ.

† Foreign Quart. Rev. vol. iv. p. 49. For this short account of the Dutch poets I am indebted to Eichhorn, vol. iv. part 1., and to the Biographie Universelle.

of Scandinavian legends, till the present period; and in this it does not appear that she had more than one poet, a Norwegian bishop, named Arrebo. Nothing, I believe, was written in Swedish. Sclavonian writers there were; but we know so little of those languages, that they cannot enter, at least during so distant a period, into the history of European literature.

CHAP. V.

SECT. V.

ON ENGLISH POETRY.

Imitators of Spenser — The Fletchers — Philosophical Poets — Denham — Donne — Cowley — Historical and Narrative Poets — Shakspeare's Sonnets — Lyric Poets — Milton's Lycidas, and other Poems.

English poets numerous in this age.

31. THE English poets of these fifty years are very numerous, and though the greater part are not familiar to the general reader, they form a favourite study of those who cultivate our poetry, and are sought by all collectors of scarce and interesting literature. Many of them have within half a century been reprinted separately, and many more in the useful and copious collections of Anderson, Chalmers, and other editors. Extracts have also been made by Headley, Ellis, Campbell, and Southey. It will be convenient to arrange them rather according to the schools to which they belonged, than in mere order of chronology.

Phineas Fletcher.

32. Whatever were the misfortunes of Spenser's life, whatever neglect he might have experienced

CHAP. V.

at the hands of a statesman grown old in cares which render a man insensible to song, his spirit might be consoled by the prodigious reputation of the Fairy Queen. He was placed at once by his country above all the great Italian names, and next to Virgil among the ancients; it was a natural consequence that some should imitate what they so deeply reverenced. An ardent admiration for Spenser inspired the genius of two young brothers, Phineas and Giles Fletcher. The first, very soon after the Queen's death, as some allusions to Lord Essex seem to denote, composed, though he did not so soon publish, a poem, entitled The Purple Island. By this strange name he expressed a subject more strange; it is a minute and elaborate account of the body and mind of man. Through five cantos the reader is regaled with nothing but allegorical anatomy, in the details of which Phineas seems tolerably skilled, evincing a great deal of ingenuity in diversifying his metaphors, and in presenting the delineation of his imaginary island with as much justice as possible to the allegory without obtruding it on the reader's view. In the sixth canto he rises to the intellectual and moral faculties of the soul, which occupy the rest of the poem. From its nature it is insuperably wearisome; yet his language is often very poetical, his versification harmonious, his invention fertile. But that perpetual monotony of allegorical persons, which sometimes displeases us even in Spenser, is seldom relieved in Fletcher; the understanding revolts at the confused crowd of inconceivable beings in a philosophical poem; and the justness of analogy,

which had given us some pleasure in the anatomical cantos, is lost in tedious descriptions of all possible moral qualities, each of them personified, which can never co-exist in the Purple Island of one individual.

CHAP. V.

Giles Fletcher.

33. Giles Fletcher, brother of Phineas, in Christ's Victory and Triumph, though his subject has not all the unity that might be desired, had a manifest superiority in its choice. Each uses a stanza of his own; Phineas one of seven lines, Giles one of eight. This poem was published in 1610. Each brother alludes to the work of the other, which must be owing to the alterations made by Phineas in his Purple Island, written probably the first, but not published, I believe, till 1633. Giles seems to have more vigour than his elder brother; but less sweetness, less smoothness, and more affectation in his style. This, indeed, is deformed by words neither English nor Latin, but simply barbarous; such as *clamping*, *eblazon*, *deprostrate*, *purpured*, *glitterand*, and many others. They both bear much resemblance to Spenser: Giles sometimes ventures to cope with him, even in celebrated passages, such as the description of the Cave of Despair.* And he has had the honour, in turn, of being followed by Milton, especially in the first meeting of our Saviour with Satan in the Paradise Regained. Both of these brothers are deserving of much praise; they were endowed with minds eminently poetical, and not inferior in imagination to any of their contemporaries. But an injudicious taste,

* Christ's Vict. and Triumph, ii. 23.

CHAP. V.

and an excessive fondness for a style which the public was rapidly abandoning, that of allegorical personification, prevented their powers from being effectively displayed.

Philosophical poetry.

34. Notwithstanding the popularity of Spenser, and the general pride in his name, that allegorical and imaginative school of poetry, of which he was the greatest ornament, did not by any means exclude a very different kind. The English, or such as by their education gave the tone in literature, had become, in the latter years of the Queen, and still more under her successor, a deeply thinking, a learned, a philosophical people. A sententious reasoning, grave, subtle and condensed, or the novel and remote analogies of wit, gained praise from many whom the creations of an excursive fancy could not attract. Hence much of the poetry of James's reign is distinguished from that of Elizabeth, except perhaps her last years, by partaking of the general character of the age; deficient in simplicity, grace and feeling, often obscure and pedantic, but impressing us with a respect for the man, where we do not recognise the poet. From this condition of public taste arose two schools of poetry, different in character, if not unequal in merit, but both appealing to the reasoning more than to the imaginative faculty as their judge.

Lord Brooke.

35. The first of these may own as its founder Sir John Davies, whose poem on the Immortality of the Soul, published in 1600, has had its due honour in our last volume. Davies is eminent for perspicuity; but this cannot be said for another philosophical poet, Sir Fulk Greville, afterwards

Lord Brooke, the bosom friend of Sir Philip Sydney, and once the patron of Jordano Bruno. The titles of Lord Brooke's poems, A Treatise of Human Learning, A Treatise of Monarchy, A Treatise of Religion, An Inquisition upon Fame and Honour, lead us to anticipate more of sense than fancy. In this we are not deceived; his mind was pregnant with deep reflection upon multifarious learning, but he struggles to give utterance to thoughts which he had not fully endowed with words, and amidst the shackles of rhyme and metre which he had not learned to manage. Hence of all our poets he may be reckoned the most obscure; in aiming at condensation, he becomes elliptical beyond the bounds of the language, and his rhymes, being forced for the sake of sound, leave all meaning behind. Lord Brooke's poetry is chiefly worth notice as an indication of that thinking spirit upon political science, which was to produce the riper speculations of Hobbes, and Harrington, and Locke.

36. This argumentative school of verse was so much in unison with the character of that generation, that Daniel, a poet of a very different temper, adopted it in his panegyric addressed to James soon after his accession, and in some other poems. It had an influence upon others who trod generally in a different track, as is especially perceived in Giles Fletcher. The Cooper's Hill of Sir John Denham, published in 1643, belongs in a considerable degree to this reasoning class of poems. It is also descriptive, but the description is made to slide into philosophy. The plan is

Denham's Cooper's Hill.

CHAP. V.

original, as far as our poetry is concerned, and I do not recollect any exception in other languages. Placing himself upon an eminence not distant from Windsor, he takes a survey of the scene; he finds the spire of St. Paul's on his farthest horizon, the Castle much nearer, and the Thames at his feet. These, with the ruins of an abbey, supply in turn materials for a reflecting rather than imaginative mind, and, with a stag-hunt which he has very well described, fill up the canvas of a poem of no great length, but once of no trifling reputation.

37. The epithet, *majestic* Denham, conferred by Pope, conveys rather too much; but Cooper's Hill is no ordinary poem. It is nearly the first instance of vigorous and rhythmical couplets, for Denham is incomparably less feeble than Browne, and less prosaic than Beaumont. Close in thought, and nervous in language like Davies, he is less hard and less monotonous; his cadences are animated and various, perhaps a little beyond the regularity that metre demands; they have been the guide to the finer ear of Dryden. Those who cannot endure the philosophic poetry, must ever be dissatisfied with Cooper's Hill; no personification, no ardent words, few metaphors beyond the common use of speech, nothing that warms, or melts, or fascinates the heart. It is rare to find lines of eminent beauty in Denham; and equally so to be struck by any one as feeble or low. His language is always well chosen and perspicuous, free from those strange turns of expression, frequent in our older poets, where the reader is apt to

suspect some error of the press, so irreconcilable do they seem with grammar or meaning. The expletive *do*, which the best of his predecessors use freely, seldom occurs in Denham; and he has in other respects brushed away the rust of languid and ineffective redundancies which have obstructed the popularity of men with more native genius than himself. *

Poets called metaphysical.

38. Another class of poets in the reigns of James and his son were those whom Johnson has called the metaphysical; a name rather more applicable, in the ordinary use of the word, to Davies and Brooke. These were such as laboured after conceits, or novel turns of thought, usually false, and resting upon some equivocation of language, or exceedingly remote analogy. This style Johnson supposes to have been derived from Marini. But Donne, its founder, as Johnson imagines, in England, wrote before Marini. It is in fact, as we have lately observed, the style which, though Marini has

* The comparison by Denham between the Thames and his own poetry was once celebrated:—

O could I flow like thee, and make thy stream
My bright example, as it is my theme:
Though deep, yet clear; though gentle, yet not dull;
Strong without rage, without o'erflowing full.

Johnson, while he highly extols these lines, truly observes, that "most of the words thus artfully opposed, are to be understood simply on one side of the comparison, and metaphorically on the other; and if there be any language which does not express intellectual operations by material images, into that language they cannot be translated." Perhaps these metaphors are so naturally applied to style, that no language of a cultivated people is without them. But the ground of objection is, in fact, that the lines contain nothing but wit, and that wit which turns on a play of words. They are rather ingenious in this respect, and remarkably harmonious, which is probably the secret of their popularity; but, as poetry, they deserve no great praise.

CHAP. V.

earned the discreditable reputation of perverting the taste of his country by it, had been gaining ground through the latter half of the sixteenth century. It was, in a more comprehensive view, one modification of that vitiated taste which sacrificed all ease and naturalness of writing and speaking for the sake of display. The mythological erudition and Grecisms of Ronsard's school, the Euphuism of that of Lilly, the "estilo culto" of Gongora, even the pedantic quotations of Burton and many similar writers, both in England and on the continent, sprang like the concetti of the Italians, and of their English imitators, from the same source, a dread of being overlooked if they paced on like their neighbours. And when a few writers had set the example of successful faults, a bad style, where no sound principles of criticism had been established, readily gaining ground, it became necessary that those who had not vigour enough to rise above the fashion, should seek to fall in with it. Nothing is more injurious to the cultivation of verse, than the trick of desiring, for praise or profit, to attract those by poetry whom nature has left destitute of every quality which genuine poetry can attract. The best, and perhaps the only secure basis for *public* taste, for an æsthetic appreciation of beauty, in a court, a college, a city, is so general a diffusion of classical knowledge, as by rendering the finest models familiar, and by giving them a sort of authority, will discountenance and check at the outset the vicious novelties which always exert some influence over uneducated minds. But this was not yet the case in England. Milton was perhaps

the first writer who eminently possessed a genuine discernment and feeling of antiquity; though it may be perceived in Spenser, and also in a very few who wrote in prose.

CHAP. V.

39. Donne is generally esteemed the earliest, as Cowley was afterwards the most conspicuous model of this manner. Many instances of it, however, occur in the lighter poetry of the Queen's reign. Donne is the most inharmonious of our versifiers, if he can be said to have deserved such a name by lines too rugged to seem metre. Of his earlier poems many are very licentious; the later are chiefly devout. Few are good for much; the conceits have not even the merit of being intelligible; it would perhaps be difficult to select three passages that we should care to read again.

Donne.

40. The second of these poets was Crashaw, a man of some imagination and great piety, but whose softness of heart, united with feeble judgment, led him to admire and imitate whatever was most extravagant in the mystic writings of Saint Teresa. He was more than Donne a follower of Marini, one of whose poems, The Massacre of the Innocents, he translated with success. It is difficult, in general, to find any thing in Crashaw that bad taste has not deformed. His poems were first published in 1646.

Crashaw.

41. In the next year, 1647, Cowley's Mistress appeared; the most celebrated performance of the miscalled metaphysical poets. It is a series of short amatory poems, in the Italian style of the age, full of analogies that have no semblance of truth, except from the double sense of words, and thoughts that

Cowley.

CHAP. V.

unite the coldness of subtlety with the hyperbolical extravagance of counterfeited passion. The anacreontic lines, and some other light pieces of Cowley, have a spirit and raciness very unlike these frigid conceits; and in the ode on the death of his friend Mr. Harvey, he gave some proofs of real sensibility and poetic grace. The Pindaric odes of Cowley were not published within this period. But it is not worth while to defer mention of them. They contain, like all his poetry, from time to time, very beautiful lines, but the faults are still of the same kind; his sensibility and good sense, nor has any poet more, are choked by false taste; and it would be difficult to fix on any one poem in which the beauties are more frequent than the blemishes. Johnson has selected the elegy on Crashaw as the finest of Cowley's works. It begins with a very beautiful couplet, but I confess that little else seems, to my taste, of much value. The Complaint, probably better known than any other poem, appears to me the best in itself. His disappointed hopes give a not unpleasing melancholy to several passages. But his Latin ode in a similar strain is much more perfect. Cowley, perhaps, upon the whole has had a reputation more above his deserts than any English poet; yet it is very easy to perceive that some who wrote better than he, did not possess so fine a genius. Johnson has written the life of Cowley with peculiar care; and as his summary of the poet's character is more favourable than my own, it may be candid to insert it in this place, as at least very discriminating, elaborate, and well expressed.

Johnson's character of him.

42. "It may be affirmed, without any encomiastic fervour, that he brought to his poetic labours a mind replete with learning, and that his pages are embellished with all the ornaments which books could supply; that he was the first who imparted to English numbers the enthusiasm of the greater ode, and the gaiety of the less;* that he was equally qualified for sprightly sallies and for lofty flights; that he was among those who freed translation from servility, and instead of following his author at a distance, walked by his side; and that, if he left versification yet improvable, he left likewise from time to time such specimens of excellence as enabled succeeding poets to improve it."

Narrative poets. Daniel.

43. The poets of historical or fabulous narrative belong to another class. Of these the earliest is Daniel, whose minor poems fall partly within the sixteenth century. His History of the Civil Wars between York and Lancaster, a poem in eight books, was published in 1604. Faithfully adhering to truth, which he does not suffer so much as an ornamental episode to interrupt, and equally studious to avoid the bolder figures of poetry, it is not surprising that Daniel should be little read. It is indeed certain that much Italian and Spanish poetry, even by those whose name has once stood rather high, depends chiefly upon merits which he abundantly possesses, a smoothness of rhythm, and a lucid narration in simple language. But that

* Was not Milton's Ode on the Nativity written as early as any of Cowley's? And would Johnson have thought Cowley superior in gaiety to Sir John Suckling?

CHAP. V.

which from the natural delight in sweet sound is enough to content the ear in the southern tongues, will always seem bald and tame in our less harmonious verse. It is the chief praise of Daniel, and must have contributed to what popularity he enjoyed in his own age, that his English is eminently pure, free from affectation of archaism and from pedantic innovation, with very little that is now obsolete. Both in prose and in poetry, he is, as to language, among the best writers of his time, and wanted but a greater confidence in his own power, or, to speak less indulgently, a greater share of it, to sustain his correct taste, calm sense, and moral feeling.

Drayton's Polyolbion.

44. Next to Daniel in time, and much above him in reach of mind, we place Michael Drayton, whose Barons' Wars have been mentioned under the preceding period, but whose more famous work was published partly in 1613, and partly in 1622. Drayton's Polyolbion is a poem of about 30,000 lines in length, written in Alexandrine couplets, a measure, from its monotony, and perhaps from its frequency in doggrell ballads, not at all pleasing to the ear. It contains a topographical description of England, illustrated with a prodigality of historical and legendary erudition. Such a poem is essentially designed to instruct, and speaks to the understanding more than to the fancy. The powers displayed in it are, however, of a high cast. It has generally been a difficulty with poets to deal with a necessary enumeration of proper names. The catalogue of ships is not the most delightful part of the Iliad, and Ariosto never encounters such a

roll of persons or places without sinking into the tamest insipidity. Virgil is splendidly beautiful upon similar occasions; but his decorative elegance could not be preserved, nor would continue to please in a poem that kept up through a great length the effort to furnish instruction. The style of Drayton is sustained, with extraordinary ability, on an equable line, from which he seldom much deviates, neither brilliant nor prosaic; few or no passages could be marked as impressive, but few are languid or mean. The language is clear, strong, various, and sufficiently figurative; the stories and fictions interspersed, as well as the general spirit and liveliness, relieve the heaviness incident to topographical description. There is probably no poem of this kind in any other language, comparable together in extent and excellence to the Polyolbion; nor can any one read a portion of it without admiration for its learned and highly gifted author. Yet perhaps no English poem, known as well by name, is so little known beyond its name; for while its immense length deters the common reader, it affords, as has just been hinted, no great harvest for selection, and would be judged very unfairly by partial extracts. It must be owned also that geography and antiquities may, in modern times, be taught better in prose than in verse; yet whoever consults the Polyolbion for such objects, will probably be repaid by petty knowledge which he may not have found anywhere else.

Browne's Britannia's Pastorals.

45. Among these historical poets I should incline to class William Browne, author of a poem with the quaint title of Britannia's Pastorals, though

CHAP. V.

his story, one of little interest, seems to have been invented by himself. Browne indeed is of no distinct school among the writers of that age; he seems to recognize Spenser as his master, but his own manner is more to be traced among later than earlier poets. He was a native of Devonshire; and his principal poem, above mentioned, relating partly to the local scenery of that county, was printed in 1613. Browne is truly a poet, full of imagination, grace and sweetness, though not very nervous or rapid. I know not why Headley, favourable enough for the most part to this generation of the sons of song, has spoken of Browne with unfair contempt. Justice however has been done to him by later critics.* But I have not observed that they take notice of what is remarkable in the history of our poetical literature, that Browne is an early model of ease and variety in the regular couplet. Many passages in his unequal poem are hardly excelled by the fables of Dryden. It is manifest that Milton was well acquainted with the writings of Browne.

Sir John Beaumont.

46. The commendation of improving the rhythm of the couplet is due also to Sir John Beaumont, author of a short poem on the battle

* "Browne," Mr. Southey says, "is a poet who produced no slight effect upon his contemporaries. George Wither in his happiest pieces has learned the manner of his friend, and Milton may be traced to him. And in our days his peculiarities have been caught, and his beauties imitated, by men who will themselves find admirers and imitators hereafter." "His poetry," Mr. Campbell, a far less indulgent judge of the older bards, observes, "is not without beauty; but it is the beauty of mere landscape and allegory, without the manners and passions that constitute human interest." Specimens of English Poetry, iv. 323.

of Bosworth Field. It was not written, however, so early as the Britannia's Pastorals of Browne. In other respects it has no pretensions to a high rank. But it may be added that a poem of Drummond on the visit of James I. to Scotland in 1617 is perfectly harmonious; and what is very remarkable in that age, he concludes the verse at every couplet with the regularity of Pope.

Davenant's Gondibert.

47. Far unlike the poem of Browne was Gondibert, published by Sir William Davenant in 1650. It may probably have been reckoned by himself an epic; but in that age the practice of Spain and Italy had effaced the distinction between the regular epic and the heroic romance. Gondibert belongs rather to the latter class by the entire want of truth in the story, though the scene is laid at the court of the Lombard kings, by the deficiency of unity in the action, by the intricacy of the events, and by the resources of the fable, which are sometimes too much in the style of comic fiction. It is so imperfect, only two books and part of the third being completed, that we can hardly judge of the termination it was to receive. Each book however, after the manner of Spenser, is divided into several cantos. It contains about 6000 lines. The metre is the four-lined stanza of alternate rhymes; one capable of great vigour, but not perhaps well adapted to poetry of imagination or of passion. These however Davenant exhibits but sparingly in Gondibert; they are replaced by a philosophical spirit, in the tone of Sir John Davies, who had adopted the same metre, and, as some have thought, nourished

CHAP. V.

by the author's friendly intercourse with Hobbes. Gondibert is written in a clear, nervous, English style; its condensation produces some obscurity, but pedantry, at least that of language, will rarely be found in it, and Davenant is less infected by the love of conceit and of extravagance than his contemporaries, though I would not assert that he is wholly exempt from the former blemish. But the chief praise of Gondibert is for masculine verse in a good metrical cadence; for the sake of which we may forgive the absence of interest in the story, and even of those glowing words and breathing thoughts which are the soul of genuine poetry. Gondibert is very little read; yet it is better worth reading than the Purple Island, though it may have less of that which distinguishes a poet from another man.

Sonnets of Shakspeare.

48. The sonnets of Shakspeare, for we now come to the minor, that is, the shorter and more lyric, poetry of the age, were published in 1609, in a manner as mysterious as their subject and contents. They are dedicated by an editor (Thomas Thorpe, a bookseller) "to Mr. W. H. the only begetter of these sonnets." * No one, as far as I remember, has ever doubted their genuineness; no one can doubt that they express not only real but intense emotions of the heart; but when they were

* The precise words of the dedication are the following:

To the only Begetter
Of these ensuing sonnets
Mr. W. H.
All Happiness
And that eternity promised
By our ever living poet
Wisheth the
Well-wishing Adventurer
In setting forth
T. T.

The title-page runs: Shakspeare's Sonnets, never before imprinted, 4to. 1609. G. Eld for T. T.

written, who was the W. H. quaintly called their begetter, by which we can only understand the cause of their being written, and to what persons or circumstances they allude, has of late years been the subject of much curiosity. These sonnets were long overlooked; Steevens spoke of them with the utmost scorn, as productions which no one could read; but a very different suffrage is generally given by the lovers of poetry, and perhaps there is now a tendency, especially among young men of poetical tempers, to exaggerate the beauties of these remarkable productions. They rise indeed in estimation as we attentively read and reflect upon them; for I do not think that at first they give us much pleasure. No one ever entered more fully than Shakspeare into the character of this species of poetry, which admits of no expletive imagery, no merely ornamental line. But though each sonnet has generally its proper unity, the sense, I do not mean the grammatical construction, will sometimes be found to spread from one to another, independently of that repetition of the leading idea, like variations of an air, which a series of them frequently exhibits, and on account of which they have latterly been reckoned by some rather an integral poem than a collection of sonnets. But this is not uncommon among the Italians, and belongs in fact to those of Petrarch himself. They may easily be resolved into several series according to their subjects*; but when read

* This has been done in a late publication, "Shakspeare's Autobiographical poems, by George Armitage Brown" (1838). It might have occurred to any attentive reader, but I do not know that the

CHAP. V.

attentively, we find them relate to one definite, though obscure, period of the poet's life; in which an attachment to some female, which seems to have touched neither his heart nor his fancy very sensibly, was overpowered, without entirely ceasing, by one to a friend; and this last is of such an enthusiastic character, and so extravagant in the phrases that the author uses, as to have thrown an unaccountable mystery over the whole work. It is true that in the poetry as well as in the fictions of early ages, we find a more ardent tone of affection in the language of friendship than has since been usual; and yet no instance has been adduced of such rapturous devotedness, such an idolatry of admiring love, as the greatest being whom nature ever produced in the human form pours forth to some unknown youth in the majority of these sonnets.

The person whom they address.

49. The notion that a woman was their general object is totally untenable, and it is strange that Coleridge should have entertained it.* Those that were evidently addressed to a woman, the person above

analysis was ever so completely made before, though almost every one has been aware that different persons are addressed in the former and latter part of the sonnets. Mr. Brown's work did not fall into my hands till nearly the time that these sheets passed through the press, which I mention on account of some coincidences of opinion, especially as to Shakspeare's knowledge of Latin.

* "It seems to me that the sonnets could only have come from a man deeply in love, and in love with a woman; and there is one sonnet which from its incongruity I take to be a purposed blind." Table Talk, vol. ii. p. 180. This sonnet the editor supposes to be the twentieth, which certainly could not have been addressed to a woman; but the proof is equally strong as to most of the rest. Coleridge's opinion is absolutely untenable; nor do I conceive that any one else is likely to maintain it after reading the sonnets of Shakspeare; but to those who have not done this the authority may justly seem imposing.

hinted, are by much the smaller part of the whole, but twenty-eight out of one hundred and fifty-four. And this mysterious Mr. W. H. must be presumed to be the idolized friend of Shakspeare. But who could he be? No one recorded in literary history or anecdote answers the description. But if we seize a clue which innumerable passages give us, and suppose that they allude to a youth of high rank as well as personal beauty and accomplishment, in whose favour and intimacy, according to the base prejudices of the world, a player and a poet, though he were the author of Macbeth, might be thought honoured, something of the strangeness, as it appears to us, of Shakspeare's humiliation in addressing him as a being before whose feet he crouched, whose frown he feared, whose injuries, and those of the most insulting kind, the seduction of the mistress to whom we have alluded, he felt and bewailed without resenting; something, I say, of the strangeness of this humiliation, and at best it is but little, may be lightened and in a certain sense rendered intelligible. And it has been ingeniously conjectured within a few years by inquirers independent of each other, that William Herbert Earl of Pembroke, born in 1580, and afterwards a man of noble and gallant character, though always of a licentious life, was shadowed under the initials of Mr. W. H. This hypothesis is not strictly proved, but sufficiently so, in my opinion, to demand our assent.*

* In the Gentleman's Magazine for 1832, p. 217, et post, it will be seen that this occurred both to Mr. Boaden and Mr. Heywood Bright. And it does not appear that Mr. Brown, author of the work above

CHAP. V.

50. Notwithstanding the frequent beauties of these sonnets, the pleasure of their perusal is greatly diminished by these circumstances; and it is impossible not to wish that Shakspeare had never written them. There is a weakness and folly in all excessive and mis-placed affection, which is not redeemed by the touches of nobler sentiments that abound in this long series of sonnets. But there are also faults of a merely critical nature. The obscurity is often such as only conjecture can penetrate; the strain of tenderness and adoration would be too monotonous, were it less unpleasing; and so many frigid conceits are scattered around, that we might almost fancy the poet to have written without genuine emotion, did not such a host of other passages attest the contrary.

Sonnets of Drummond and others.

51. The sonnets of Drummond of Hawthornden, the most celebrated in that class of poets, have obtained, probably, as much praise as they deserve.*

quoted, had any knowledge of their priority.

Drake has fixed on Lord Southampton as the object of these sonnets, induced probably by the tradition of his friendship with Shakspeare, and by the latter's having dedicated to him his Venus and Adonis, as well as by what is remarkable on the face of the series of sonnets, that Shakspeare looked up to his friend "with reverence and homage." But, unfortunately, this was only the reverence and homage of an inferior to one of high rank, and not such as the virtues of Southampton might have challenged. Proofs of the low moral character of "Mr. W. H." are continual. It was also impossible that Lord Southampton could be called "beauteous and lovely youth," or "sweet boy." Mrs. Jameson, in her "Loves of the Poets," has adopted the same hypothesis, but is forced in consequence to suppose some of the earlier sonnets to be addressed to a woman.

Pembroke succeeded to his father in 1601: I incline to think that the sonnets were written about that time, some probably earlier, some later. That they were the same as Meres, in 1598, has mentioned among the compositions of Shakspeare, "his sugred sonnets among his private friends," I do not believe, both on account of the date, and from the peculiarly personal allusions they contain.

* I concur in this with Mr. Campbell, iv. 343. Mr. Southey

But they are polished and elegant, free from conceit and bad taste, in pure unblemished English; some are pathetic or tender in sentiment, and if they do not show much originality, at least would have acquired a fair place among the Italians of the sixteenth century. Those of Daniel, of Drayton, and of Sir William Alexander, afterwards Earl of Stirling, are perhaps hardly inferior. Some may doubt, however, whether the last poet should be placed on such a level.* But the difficulty of finding the necessary rhymes in our language has caused most who have attempted the sonnet to swerve from laws which cannot be transgressed, at least to the degree they have often dared, without losing the unity for which that complex mechanism was contrived. Certainly three quatrains of alternate rhymes, succeeded by a couplet, which Drummond, like many other English poets, has sometimes given us, is the very worst form of the sonnet, even if, in deference to a scanty number of Italian prece-

thinks Drummond "has deserved the high reputation he has obtained;" which seems to say the same thing, but is in fact different. He observes that Drummond "frequently borrows and sometimes translates from the Italian and Spanish poets." Southey's British Poets, p. 798. The furious invective of Gifford against Drummond for having written private memoranda of his conversations with Ben Jonson, which he did not publish, and which, for aught we know, were perfectly faithful, is absurd. Any one else would have been thankful for so much literary anecdote.

* Lord Stirling is rather monotonous, as sonnetteers usually are, and he addresses his mistress by the appellation, "Fair tygress." Campbell observes that there is elegance of expression in a few of Stirling's shorter pieces. Vol. iv. p. 206. The longest poem of Stirling is intitled Domesday, in twelve books, or, as he calls them, hours. It is written in the Italian octave stanza, and has somewhat of the condensed style of the philosophical school, which he seems to have imitated, but his numbers are harsh.

CHAP. V.

dents, we allow it to pass as a sonnet at all.* We possess indeed noble poetry in the form of sonnet; yet with us it seems more fitted for grave than amatory composition; in the latter we miss the facility and grace of our native English measures, the song, the madrigal, or the ballad.

Carew.

52. Carew is the most celebrated among the lighter poets, though no collection has hitherto embraced his entire writings. Headley has said, and Ellis echoes the praise, that "Carew has the ease without the pedantry of Waller, and perhaps less conceit. Waller is too exclusively considered as the first man who brought versification to anything like its present standard. Carew's pretensions to the same merit are seldom sufficiently either considered or allowed." Yet in point of versification, others of the same age seem to have surpassed Carew, whose lines are often very harmonious, but not so artfully constructed or so uniformly pleasing as those of Waller. He is remarkably unequal; the best of his little poems, (none of more than thirty lines are good) excel all of his time; but, after a few lines of great beauty, we often come to

* The legitimate sonnet consists of two quatrains and two tercets; as much skill, to say the least, is required for the management of the latter as of the former. The rhymes of the last six lines are capable of many arrangements; but by far the worst, and also the least common in Italy, is that we usually adopt, the fifth and sixth rhyming together, frequently after a full pause, so that the sonnet ends with the point of an epigram. The best form, as the Italians hold, is the rhyming together of the three uneven, and the three even lines; but as our language is less rich in consonant terminations, there can be no objection to what has abundant precedents even in theirs, the rhyming of the first and fourth, second and fifth, third and sixth, lines. This, with a break in the sense at the third line, will make a real sonnet, which Shakspeare, Milton, Bowles, and Wordsworth have often failed to give us, even where they have given us something good instead.

some ill expressed or obscure, or weak, or inharmonious passage. Few will hesitate to acknowledge that he has more fancy and more tenderness than Waller, but less choice, less judgment and knowledge where to stop, less of the equability which never offends, less attention to the unity and thread of his little pieces. I should hesitate to give him, on the whole, the preference as a poet, taking collectively the attributes of that character; for we must not, in such a comparison, overlook a good deal of very inferior merit which may be found in the short volume of Carew's poems. The best has great beauty, but he has had, in late criticism, his full share of applause. Two of his most pleasing little poems appear also among those of Herrick; and as Carew's were, I believe, published posthumously, I am rather inclined to prefer the claim of the other poet, independently of some internal evidence as to one of them. In all ages, these very short compositions circulate for a time in polished society, while mistakes as to the real author are natural.*

* One of these poems begins, "Amongst the myrtles as I walked, Love and my sighs thus intertalked." Herrick wants four good lines which are in Carew; and as they are rather more likely to have been interpolated than left out, this leads to a sort of inference that he was the original; there are also some other petty improvements. The second poem is that beginning "Ask me why I send you here This firstling of the infant year." Herrick gives the second line strangely, "This sweet infanta of the year," which is little else than nonsense; and all the other variances are for the worse. I must leave it in doubt, whether he borrowed, and disfigured a little, or was himself improved upon. I must own that he has a trick of spoiling what he takes. Suckling has an incomparable image, on a lady dancing.

Her feet beneath the petticoat,
Like little mice, stole in and out,
As if they feared the light—

Herrick has it thus—

Her pretty feet, *like snails*, did creep
A little out;

A most singular parallel for an elegant dancer.

CHAP. V.

Ben Jonson.

53. The minor poetry of Ben Jonson is extremely beautiful. This is partly mixed with his masques and interludes, poetical and musical rather than dramatic pieces, and intended to gratify the imagination by the charms of song, as well as by the varied scenes that were brought before the eye; partly in very short effusions of a single sentiment, among which two epitaphs are known by heart. Jonson possessed an admirable taste and feeling in poetry, which his dramas, except the Sad Shepherd, do not entirely lead us to value highly enough; and when we consider how many other intellectual excellencies distinguished him, wit, observation, judgment, memory, learning, we must acknowledge that the inscription on his tomb, O rare Ben Jonson! is not more pithy than it is true.

Wither.

54. George Wither, by siding with the less poetical, though more prosperous party in the civil war, and by a profusion of temporary writings to serve the ends of faction and folly, has left a name which we were accustomed to despise, till Ellis did justice to "that playful fancy, pure taste and artless delicacy of sentiment which distinguish the poetry of his early youth." His best poems were published in 1622 with the title "Mistress of Philarete." Some of them are highly beautiful, and bespeak a mind above the grovelling puritanism into which he afterwards fell. I think there is hardly any thing in our lyric poetry of this period equal to Wither's lines on his Muse, published by Ellis.*

* Ellis's Specimens of Early English Poets, iii. 96.

Habington.

55. The poetry of Habington is that of a pure and amiable mind, turned to versification by the custom of the age, during a real passion for a lady of birth and virtue, the Castara whom he afterwards married; but it displays no great original power, nor is it by any means exempt from the ordinary blemishes of hyperbolical compliment and far-fetched imagery. The poems of William Earl of Pembroke, long known by the character drawn for him by Clarendon, and now as the object of Shakspeare's doting friendship, were ushered into the world after his death, with a letter of extravagant flattery addressed by Donne to Christiana Countess of Devonshire.* But there is little reliance to be placed on the freedom from interpolation of these posthumous editions. Among these poems attributed to Lord Pembroke, we find one of the best known of Carew's†, and even the famous lines addressed to the Soul, which some have given to Silvester. The poems, in general, are of little merit; some are grossly indecent; nor would they be mentioned here except for the interest recently attached to the author's name. But they throw no light whatever on the sonnets of Shakspeare.

Earl of Pembroke.

Suckling.

56. Sir John Suckling is acknowledged to have left far behind him all former writers of song in gaiety and ease; it is not equally clear that he has ever since been surpassed. His poetry aims

* The only edition that I have seen, or that I find mentioned, of Lord Pembroke's poems is in 1660. But as Donne died in 1631, I conceive that there must be one of earlier date. The Countess of Devonshire is not called dowager; her husband died in 1643.

† Ask me no more whither do stray
The golden atoms of the day.

CHAP. V.

at no higher praise; he shows no sentiment or imagination, either because he had them not, or because he did not require either in the style he chose. Perhaps the Italians may have poetry in that style equal to Suckling's; I do not know that they have, nor do I believe that there is any in French; that there is none in Latin I know.*

Lovelace.

Lovelace is chiefly known by a single song; his other poetry is much inferior; and indeed it may be generally remarked that the flowers of our early verse, both in the Elizabethan and the subsequent age, have been well culled by good taste and a friendly spirit of selection. We must not judge of them, or shall judge of them very favourably, by the extracts of Headley or Ellis.

Herrick.

57. The most amorous, and among the best of our amorous poets was Robert Herrick, a clergyman ejected from his living in Devonshire by the long parliament, whose "Hesperides, or Poems Human and Divine," were published in 1648. Herrick's divine poems are of course such as might be presumed by their title and by his calling; of his human, which are poetically much superior, and probably written in early life, the greater portion is light and voluptuous, while some border on the licentious and indecent. A selection was published in 1815, by which, as commonly happens, the poetical fame of Herrick does not suffer; a number of dull epigrams are omitted, and the editor has a manifest preference for what must be

* Suckling's Epithalamium, though not written for those "Qui Musas colitis severiores," has been read by almost all the world, and is a matchless piece of liveliness and facility.

owned to be the most elegant and attractive part of his author's rhymes. He has much of the lively grace that distinguishes Anacreon and Catullus, and approaches also, with a less cloying monotony, to the Basia of Joannes Secundus. Herrick has as much variety as the poetry of kisses can well have; but his love is in a very slight degree that of sentiment, or even any intense passion; his mistresses have little to recommend them, even in his own eyes, save their beauties, and none of these are omitted in his catalogues. Yet he is abundant in the resources of verse; without the exuberant gaiety of Suckling, or perhaps the delicacy of Carew, he is sportive, fanciful, and generally of polished language. The faults of his age are sometimes apparent; though he is not often obscure, he runs, more perhaps for the sake of variety than any other cause, into occasional pedantry; he has his conceits and false thoughts, but these are more than redeemed by the numerous very little poems, (for those of Herrick are frequently not longer than epigrams) which may be praised without much more qualification than belongs to such poetry.

Milton.

58. John Milton was born in 1609. Few are ignorant of his life, in recovering and recording every circumstance of which no diligence has been spared, nor has it often been unsuccessful. Of his Latin poetry some was written at the age of seventeen; in English we have nothing, I believe, the date of which is known to be earlier than the sonnet on entering his twenty-third year. In 1634 he wrote Comus, which was published

CHAP. V.

in 1637. Lycidas was written in the latter year, and most of his shorter pieces soon afterwards, except the sonnets, some of which do not come within the first half of the century.

His Comus.

59. Comus was sufficient to convince any one of taste and feeling that a great poet had arisen in England, and one partly formed in a different school from his contemporaries. Many of them had produced highly beautiful and imaginative passages; but none had evinced so classical a judgment, none had aspired to so regular a perfection. Jonson had learned much from the ancients; but there was a grace in their best models which he did not quite attain. Neither his Sad Shepherd nor the Faithful Shepherdess of Fletcher have the elegance or dignity of Comus. A noble virgin and her young brothers, by whom this masque was originally represented, required an elevation, a purity, a sort of severity of sentiment which no one in that age could have given but Milton. He avoided, and nothing loth, the more festive notes which dramatic poetry was wont to mingle with its serious strain. But for this he compensated by the brightest hues of fancy and the sweetest melody of song. In Comus we find nothing prosaic or feeble, no false taste in the incidents and not much in the language, nothing over which we should desire to pass on a second perusal. The want of what we may call personality, none of the characters having names, except Comus himself, who is a very indefinite being, and the absence of all positive attributes of time and place, enhance the ideality of the fiction

by a certain indistinctness not unpleasing to the imagination.

Lycidas.

60. It has been said, I think very fairly, that Lycidas is a good test of a real feeling for what is peculiarly called poetry. Many, or perhaps we might say most readers do not taste its excellence; nor does it follow that they may not greatly admire Pope and Dryden, or even Virgil and Homer. It is however somewhat remarkable that Johnson, who has committed his critical reputation by the most contemptuous depreciation of this poem, had in an earlier part of his life selected the tenth eclogue of Virgil for peculiar praise *; the tenth eclogue, which, beautiful as it is, belongs to the same class of pastoral and personal allegory, and requires the same sacrifice of reasoning criticism as the Lycidas itself. In the age of Milton, the poetical world had been accustomed by the Italian and Spanish writers to a more abundant use of allegory than has been pleasing to their posterity; but Lycidas is not so much in the nature of an allegory as of a masque; the characters pass before our eyes in imagination, as on the stage; they are chiefly mythological, but not creations of the poet. Our sympathy with the fate of Lycidas may not be much stronger than for the desertion of Gallus by his mistress; but many poems will yield an exquisite pleasure to the imagination that produce no emotion in the heart; or none at least, except through associations independent of the subject.

61. The introduction of St. Peter after the fabulous deities of the sea has appeared an in-

* Adventurer, No. 92.

CHAP. V.

congruity deserving of censure to some admirers of this poem. It would be very reluctantly that we could abandon to this criticism the most splendid passage it presents. But the censure rests, as I think, on too narrow a principle. In narrative or dramatic poetry, where something like illusion or momentary belief is to be produced, the mind requires an objective possibility, a capacity of real existence, not only in all the separate portions of the imagined story, but in their coherency and relation to a common whole. Whatever is obviously incongruous, whatever shocks our previous knowledge of possibility, destroys to a certain extent that acquiescence in the fiction, which it is the true business of the fiction to produce. But the case is not the same in such poems as Lycidas. They pretend to no credibility, they aim at no illusion; they are read with the willing abandonment of the imagination to a waking dream, and require only that general possibility, that combination of images which common experience does not reject as incompatible, without which the fancy of the poet would be only like that of the lunatic. And it had been so usual to blend sacred with mythological personages in allegory, that no one probably in Milton's age would have been struck by the objection.

Allegro and Penseroso.

62. The Allegro and Penseroso are perhaps more familiar to us than any part of the writings of Milton. They satisfy the critics, and they delight mankind. The choice of images is so judicious, their succession so rapid, the allusions are so various and pleasing, the leading distinction of the poems

is so felicitously maintained, the versification is so animated, that we may place them at the head of that long series of descriptive poems which our language has to boast. It may be added, as in the greater part of Milton's writings, that they are sustained at an uniform pitch, with few blemishes of expression and scarce any feebleness; a striking contrast, in this respect, to all the contemporaneous poetry, except perhaps that of Waller. Johnson has thought, that while there is no mirth in his melancholy, he can detect some melancholy in his mirth. This seems to be too strongly put; but it may be said that his Allegro is rather cheerful than gay, and that even his cheerfulness is not always without effort. In these poems he is indebted to Fletcher, to Burton, to Browne, to Withers, and probably to more of our early versifiers; for he was a great collector of sweets from those wild flowers.

Ode on the Nativity.

63. The Ode on the Nativity, far less popular than most of the poetry of Milton, is perhaps the finest in the English language. A grandeur, a simplicity, a breadth of manner, an imagination at once elevated and restrained by the subject, reign throughout it. If Pindar is a model of lyric poetry, it would be hard to name any other ode so truly Pindaric; but more has naturally been derived from the Scriptures. Of the other short poems, that on the death of the Marchioness of Winchester deserves particular mention. It is pity that the first lines are bad, and the last much worse; for rarely can we find more feeling or beauty than in some other passages.

CHAP. V.

His sonnets.

64. The sonnets of Milton have obtained of late years the admiration of all real lovers of poetry. Johnson has been as impotent to fix the public taste in this instance as in his other criticisms on the smaller poems of the author of Paradise Lost. These sonnets are indeed unequal; the expression is sometimes harsh, and sometimes obscure; sometimes too much of pedantic allusion interferes with the sentiment, nor am I reconciled to his frequent deviations from the best Italian structure. But such blemishes are lost in the majestic simplicity, the holy calm, that ennoble many of these short compositions.

Anonymous poetry.

65. Many anonymous songs, many popular lays, both of Scotish and English minstrelsy, were poured forth in this period of the seventeenth century. Those of Scotland became, after the union of the crowns, and the consequent cessation of rude border frays, less warlike than before; they are still however imaginative, pathetic and natural. It is probable that the best are a little older; but their date is seldom determinable with much precision. The same may be said of the English ballads, which, so far as of a merely popular nature, appear, by their style and other circumstances, to belong more frequently to the reign of James I. than any other period.

Sect. VI.

ON LATIN POETRY.

Latin Poets of France — And other Countries — Of England — May — Milton.

Latin poets of France.

66. France, in the latter part of the sixteenth century, had been remarkably fruitful of Latin poetry; it was the pride of her scholars, and sometimes of her statesmen. In the age that we have now in review, we do now find so many conspicuous names; but the custom of academical institutions, and especially of the seminaries conducted by the Jesuits, kept up a facility of Latin versification, which it was by no means held pedantic or ridiculous to exhibit in riper years. The French enumerate several with praise, Guijon, Bourbon, (Borbonius) whom some have compared with the best of the preceding century, and among whose poems that on the death of Henrý IV. is reckoned the best, Cerisantes, equal, as some of his admirers think, to Sarbievius, and superior, as others presume, to Horace, and Petavius, who having solaced his leisure hours with Greek and Hebrew, as well as Latin versification, has obtained in the last the general suffrage of critics.*

* Baillet, Jugemens des Sçavans, has criticised all these and several more. Rapin's opinion on Latin poetry is entitled to much regard from his own excellence in it. He praises three lyrists, Casimir, Magdelenet and Cerisantes; the two latter being French. Sarbieuski a de l'élévation mais sans pureté; Magdelenet est pur mais

CHAP. V.

I can speak of none of these from direct knowledge, except of Borbonius, whose Diræ on the death of Henry have not appeared to my judgment deserving of so much eulogy.

In Germany and Italy.

67. The Germans wrote much in Latin, especially in the earlier decads of this period. Melissus Schedius, not undistinguished in his native tongue, might have been mentioned as a Latin poet in the last volume, since most of his compositions were published in the sixteenth century. In Italy we have not many conspicuous names. The bad taste that infested the school of Marini, spread also, according to Tiraboschi, over Latin poetry. Martial, Lucan and Claudian became in their eyes better models than Catullus and Virgil. Baillet, or rather those whom he copies, and among whom Rossi, author of the Pinacotheca Virorum illustrium, under the name of Erythræus, a profuse and indiscriminating panegyrist, for the most part, of his contemporaries, furnishes the chief materials, bestows praise on Cesarini, and Querenghi, whom even Tiraboschi selects from the crowd, and Maffei Barberini, best known as pope Urban VIII.

In Holland. Heinsius.

68. Holland stood at the head of Europe in this line of poetry. Grotius has had the reputation of writing with spirit, elegance and imagination. But he is excelled by Heinsius, whose elegies, still more than his hexameters, may be ranked high in

sans élévation. Cerisantes a joint dans ses odes l'un et l'autre ; car il écrit noblement, et d'un style assez pur. Après tout, il n'a pas tant de feu, que Casimir, lequel avoit bien de l'esprit, et de cet esprit heureux qui fait les poètes. Bucanan a des odes dignes de l'antiquité, mais il a de grandes inégalités par le mélange de son caractère qui n'est pas assez uni. Réflexions sur la Poetique, p. 208.

modern Latin. The habit, however, of classical imitation has so much weakened all individual originality in these versifiers, that it is often difficult to distinguish them, or to pronounce of any twenty lines that they might not have been written by some other author. Compare for example the elegies of Buchanan with those of Heinsius, wherever there are no proper names to guide us; a more finished and continued elegance belongs on the whole, (as at least I should say) to the latter, but in a short passage this may not be perceptible, and I believe few would guess with much confidence between the two. Heinsius however, like most of the Dutch, is remarkably fond of a polysyllabic close in the pentameter; at least in his Juvenilia, which, notwithstanding their title, are perhaps better than his later productions. As it is not necessary to make a distinct head for the Latin drama, we may here advert to a tragedy by Heinsius, Herodes Infanticida. This has been the subject of a critique by Balzac, for the most part very favourable; and it certainly contains some highly beautiful passages. Perhaps the description of the Virgin's feelings on the nativity, though praised by Balzac, and exquisitely classical in diction, is not quite in the best taste.*

* Oculosque nunc huc pavida nunc illuc jacit,
Interque matrem virginemque hærent adhuc
Suspensa matris gaudia, ac trepidus pudor.
* * * sæpe, cum blandus puer
Aut a sopore languidas jactat manus,
Tenerisque labris pectus intactum petit,
Virginea subitus ora perfundit rubor,
Laudemque matris virginis crimen putat.

A critique on the poems of Heinsius will be found in the Retrospective Review, vol. i. p. 49.; but notwithstanding the laudatory

CHAP. V.

Casimir Sarbievius.

69. Sidonius Hoschius, a Flemish Jesuit, is extolled by Baillet and his authorities. But another of the same order, Casimir Sarbievius, a Pole, is far better known, and, in lyric poetry, which he almost exclusively cultivated, obtained a much higher reputation. He had lived some years at Rome, and is full of Roman allusion. He had read Horace, as Sannazarius had Virgil, and Heinsius Ovid, till the style and tone became spontaneous, but he has more of centonism than the other two. Yet while he constantly reminds us of Horace, it is with as constant an inferiority; we feel that his Rome was not the same Rome, that Urban VIII. was not Augustus, nor the Polish victories on the Danube like those of the sons of Livia. Hence his flattery of the great, though not a step beyond that of his master, seems rather more displeasing, because we have it only on his word that they were truly great. Sarbievius seldom rises high or pours out an original feeling; but he is free from conceits, never becomes prosaic, and knows how to put in good language the common-places with which his subject happens to furnish him. He is, to a certain degree, in Latin poetry what Chiabrera is in Italian, but does not deserve so high a place. Sarbievius was perhaps the first who succeeded much in the Alcaic stanza, which the earlier poets

spirit, which is for the most part too indiscriminating in that publication, the reviewer has not done justice to Heinsius, and hardly seems, perhaps, a very competent judge of Latin verse. The suffrages of those who were so, in favour of this Batavian poet, are collected by Baillet. n. 1482.

seem to avoid, or to use unskilfully. But he has many unwarrantable licences in his metre, and even false quantities, as is common to the great majority of these Latin versifiers.

Barlæus.

70. Gaspar Barlæus had as high a name, perhaps, as any Latin poet of this age. His rhythm is indeed excellent, but if he ever rises to other excellence, I have not lighted on the passages. A greater equality I have never found than in Barlæus; nothing is bad, nothing is striking. It was the practice with Dutchmen on their marriage to purchase epithalamiums in hexameter verse; and the muse of Barlæus was in request. These nuptial songs are of course about Peleus and Thetis, or similar personages, interspersed with fitting praises of the bride and bridegroom. Such poetry is not likely to rise high. The epicedia, or funeral lamentations, paid for by the heir, are little, if at all, better than the epithalamia; and the panegyrical effusions on public or private events rather worse. The elegies of Barlæus, as we generally find, are superior to the hexameters; he has here the same smoothness of versification, and a graceful gaiety which gives us pleasure. In some of his elegies and epistles he counterfeits the Ovidian style extremely well, so that they might pass for those of his model. Still there is an equability, a recurrence of trivial thoughts and forms, which in truth is too much characteristic of modern Latin to be a reproach to Barlæus. He uses the polysyllabic termination less than earlier Dutch poets. One of the epithalamia of Barlæus, it may be observed before we leave him, is entitled Paradisus, and

CHAP. V.

recounts the nuptials of Adam and Eve. It is possible that Milton may have seen this; the fourth book of the Paradise Lost compresses the excessive diffuseness of Barlæus, but the ideas are in great measure the same. Yet since this must naturally be the case, we cannot presume imitation. That Milton availed himself of all the poetry he had read, we cannot doubt; if Lauder had possessed as much learning as malignity, he might have made out his case (such as it would have been), without having recourse to his own stupid forgeries. Few of the poems of Barlæus are so redundant as this; he has the gift of stringing together mythological parallels and descriptive poetry without stint, and his discretion does not inform him where to stop.

Balde. Greek poems of Heinsius.

71. The eight books of Sylvæ by Balde, a German ecclesiastic, are extolled by Baillet and Bouterwek far above their value; the odes are tumid and unclassical; yet some have called him equal to Horace. Heinsius tried his skill in Greek verse. His Peplus Græcorum Epigrammatum was published in 1613. These are what our schoolboys would call very indifferent in point of elegance, and, as I should conceive, of accuracy: articles and expletives (as they used to be happily called), are perpetually employed for the sake of the metre, not of the sense.

Latin poets of Scotland. Jonston's Psalms.

72. Scotland might perhaps compete with Holland in this as well as in the preceding age. In the Delitiæ Poetarum Scotorum, published in 1637 by Arthur Jonston, we find about an equal produce of each century, the whole number being thirty-

seven. Those of Jonston himself, and some elegies by Scot of Scotstarvet, are among the best. The Scots certainly wrote Latin with a good ear and considerable elegance of phrase. A sort of critical controversy was carried on in the last century as to the versions of the psalms by Buchanan and Jonston. Though the national honour may seem equally secure by the superiority of either, it has, I believe, been usual in Scotland to maintain the older poet against all the world. I am nevertheless inclined to think that Jonston's psalms, all of which are in elegiac metre, do not fall short of those of Buchanan, either in elegance of style or in correctness of Latinity. In the 137th, with which Buchanan has taken much pains, he may be allowed the preference, but not at a great interval, and he has attained this superiority by too much diffuseness.

Owen's Epigrams.

73. Nothing good, and hardly tolerable, in a poetical sense, had appeared in Latin verse among ourselves till this period. Owen's epigrams, (Audoeni Epigrammata,) a well-known collection, were published in 1607; unequal enough, they are sometimes neat and more often witty: but they scarcely aspire to the name of poetry. Alabaster, a man of recondite Hebrew learning, published in 1632 his tragedy of Roxana, which, as he tells us, was written about forty years before for one night's representation, probably at college, but had been lately printed by some plagiary as his own. He forgets however to inform the reader, and thus lays himself open to some recrimination, that his tragedy is very largely borrowed from the Dalida

Alabaster's Roxana.

CHAP. V.

of Groto, an Italian dramatist of the sixteenth century.* The story, the characters, the incidents, almost every successive scene, many thoughts, descriptions and images, are taken from this original; but it is a very free translation, or rather differs from what can be called a translation. The tragedy of Groto is shortened, and Alabaster has thrown much into another form, besides introducing much of his own. The plot is full of all the accumulated horror and slaughter in which the Italians delighted on their stage. I rather prefer the original tragedy. Alabaster has spirit and fire with some degree of skill; but his notion of tragic style is of the "King Cambyses' vein"; he is inflated and hyperbolical to excess, which is not the case with Groto.

May's Supplement to Lucan.

74. But the first Latin poetry which England can vaunt is May's Supplement to Lucan, in seven books, which carry down the history of the Pharsalia to the death of Cæsar. This is not only a very spirited poem, but, in many places at least, an excellent imitation. The versification, though it frequently reminds us of his model, is somewhat more negligent. May seems rarely to fall into Lucan's tumid extravagances, or to emulate his philosophical grandeur; but the narration is almost as impetuous and rapid, the images as thronged; and sometimes we have rather a happy imitation

* I am indebted for the knowledge of this to a manuscript note I found in the copy of Alabaster's Roxana in the British Museum: Haud multum abest hæc tragedia a pura versione tragediæ Italicæ Ludovici Groti Cæci Hadriensis cui titulus Dalida. This induced me to read the tragedy of Groto, which I had not previously done.

The title of Roxana runs thus: Roxana tragedia a plagiarii unguibus vindicata aucta et agnita ab autore Gul. Alabastro. Lond. 1632.

of the ingenious sophisms Lucan is apt to employ. The death of Cato and that of Cæsar are among the passages well worthy of praise. In some lines on Cleopatra's intrigue with Cæsar, being married to her brother, he has seized, with felicitous effect, not only the broken cadences, but the love of moral paradox we find in Lucan.* CHAP. V.

Milton's Latin poems.

75. Many of the Latin poems of Milton were written in early life, some even at the age of seventeen. His name, and the just curiosity of mankind to trace the development of a mighty genius, would naturally attract our regard. They are in themselves full of classical elegance, of thoughts natural and pleasing, of a diction culled with taste from the gardens of ancient poetry, of a versification remarkably well-cadenced and grateful to the ear. There is in them, without a marked originality, which Latin verse can rarely admit but at the price of some incorrectness or impropriety, a more individual display of the poet's mind than we usually find. "In the elegies," it is said by Warton, a very competent judge of Latin poetry, "Ovid was professedly Milton's model for language and versification. They are not however a perpetual and uniform tissue of Ovidian phraseology. With Ovid in view he has an original manner and character of his own, which exhibit a remarkable

* ——— Nec crimen inesse
Concubitu nimium tali, Cleopatra, putabunt
Qui Ptolemæorum thalamos, consuetaque jura
Incestæ novere domûs, fratremque sorori
Conjugio junctam, sacræ sub nomine tædæ
Majus adulterio delictum; turpius îsset,
Quis credat? justi ad thalamos Cleopatra mariti,
Utque minus lecto peccaret, adultera facta est.

CHAP. V.

perspicuity of contexture, a native facility and fluency. Nor does his observation of Roman models oppress or destroy our great poet's inherent powers of invention and sentiment. I value these pieces as much for their fancy and genius as for their style and expression. That Ovid, among the Latin poets, was Milton's favourite, appears not only from his elegiac but his hexametric poetry. The versification of our author's hexameters has yet a different structure from that of the Metamorphoses: Milton's is more clear, intelligible, and flowing; less desultory, less familiar, and less embarrassed, with a frequent recurrence of periods. Ovid is at once rapid and abrupt."* Why Warton should have at once supposed Ovid to be Milton's favourite model in hexameters, and yet so totally different as he represents him to be, seems hard to say. The structure of our poet's hexameters is much more Virgilian, nor do I see the least resemblance in them to the manner of Ovid. These Latin poems of Milton bear some traces of juvenility, but, for the most part, such as please us for that very reason; it is the spring-time of an ardent and brilliant fancy, before the stern and sour spirit of polemical puritanism had gained entrance into his mind, the voice of the Allegro and of Comus.

* Warton's essay on the Latin poetry of Milton, inserted at length in Todd's edition.

CHAP. VI.

HISTORY OF DRAMATIC LITERATURE FROM 1600 TO 1650.

SECT. I.

ON THE ITALIAN AND SPANISH DRAMA.

Character of the Italian Theatre in this Age — Bonarelli — The Spanish Theatre — Calderon — Appreciation of his Merits as a Dramatic Poet.

CHAP. VI.

Decline of the Italian theatre.

1. THE Italian theatre, if we should believe one of its historians, fell into total decay during the whole course of the seventeenth century, though the number of dramatic pieces of various kinds was by no means small. He makes a sort of apology for inserting in a copious list of dramatic performances any that appeared after 1600, and stops entirely with 1650.* But in this he seems hardly to have done justice to a few, which, if not of remarkable excellence, might be selected from the rest. Andreini is perhaps best known by name in England, and that for one only of his eighteen dramas, the Adamo, which has been supposed, on too precarious grounds, to have furnished the idea of Paradise Lost in the original form, as it was planned by its great author. The Adamo was first pub-

* Riccoboni, Hist. du Théatre Italien, vol. i.

CHAP. VI.

lished in 1613, and afterwards with amplification in 1641. It is denominated "A Sacred Representation;" and, as Andreini was a player by profession, must be presumed to have been brought upon the stage. It is however asserted by Riccoboni, that those who wrote regular tragedies did not cause them to be represented; probably he might have scrupled to give that epithet to the Adamo. Hayley and Walker have reckoned it a composition of considerable beauty.

2. The majority of Italian tragedies in the seventeenth century were taken, like the Adamo, from sacred subjects, including such as ecclesiastical legends abundantly supplied. Few of these gave sufficient scope, either by action or character, for the diversity of excitement which the stage demands. Tragedies more truly deserving that name were the Solimano of Bonarelli, the Tancredi of Campeggio, the Demetrius of Rocco, which Salfi prefers to the rest, and the Aristodemo of Carlo de Dottori. A drama by Testi, L'Isola di Alcina, had some reputation; but in this, which the title betrays not to be a legitimate tragedy, he introduced musical airs, and thus trod on the boundaries of a rival art.* It has been suggested, with no inconsiderable probability, that in her passion for the melodrame Italy lost all relish for the graver tone of tragedy. Music, at least the music of the opera, conspired with many more important circumstances to spread an effeminacy over the public character.

* Salfi, Continuation de Ginguéné, vol. xii. chap. 9. Besides this larger work, Salfi published in 1829 a short essay on the Italian stage, Saggio Storico-Critico della Commedia Italiana.

3. The pastoral drama had always been allied to musical sentiment, even though it might be without accompaniment. The feeling it inspired was nearly that of the opera. In this style we find one imitation of Tasso and Guarini, inferior in most qualities, yet deserving some regard, and once popular even with the critics of Italy. This was the Filli di Sciro of Bonarelli, published at Ferrara, a city already fallen into the hands of priests, but round whose deserted palaces the traditions of poetical glory still lingered, in 1607, and represented by an academy in the same place soon afterwards. It passed through numerous editions, and was admired, even beyond the Alps, during the whole century, and perhaps still longer. It displays much of the bad taste and affectation of that period. Bonarelli is as strained in the construction of his story and in his characters, as he is in his style. Celia, the heroine of this pastoral, struggles with a double love, the original idea, as he might truly think, of his drama, which he wrote a long dissertation in order to justify. It is however far less conformable to the truth of nature than to the sophisticated society for which he wrote. A wanton capricious court lady might perhaps waver, with some warmth of inclination towards both, between two lovers, " Alme dell' alma mia," as Celia calls them, and be very willing to possess either. But what is morbid in moral affection seldom creates sympathy, or is fit either for narrative poetry or the stage. Bonarelli's diction is studied and polished to the highest degree; and though its false refinement and affected graces often displease us,

Filli di Sciro.

CHAP. VI.

the real elegance of insulated passages makes us pause to admire. In harmony and sweetness of sound he seems fully equal to his predecessors, Tasso and Guarini; but he has neither the pathos of the one, nor the fertility of the other. The language and turn of thought seems, more than in the Pastor Fido, to be that of the opera, wanting indeed nothing but the intermixture of air to be perfectly adapted to music. Its great reputation, which even Crescimbeni does his utmost to keep up, proves the decline of good taste in Italy, and the lateness of its revival.*

Translations of Spanish dramas.

4. A new fashion which sprung up about 1620, both marks the extinction of a taste for genuine tragedy, and by furnishing a substitute, stood in the way of its revival. Translations from Spanish tragedies and tragi-comedies, those of Lope de Vega and his successors, replaced the native muse of Italy. These were in prose and in three acts, irregular of course, and with very different characteristics from those of the Italian school. "The very name of tragedy," says Riccoboni, "became unknown in our country; the *monsters* which usurped the place did not pretend to that glorious title. Tragi-comedies rendered from the Spanish, such as Life is a Dream (of Calderon), the Samson, the Guest of Stone, and others of the same class, were the popular ornaments of the Italian stage." †

* Istoria della volgar Poesia, iv. 147. He places the Filli di Sciro next to the Aminta.

† Hist. du Théatre Italien, i. 47. The extemporaneous comedy was called commedia dell' arte. "It consisted," says Salfi, "in a mere sketch or plan of a dramatic

5. The extemporaneous comedy had always been the amusement of the Italian populace, not to say of all who wished to unbend their minds. An epoch in this art was made in 1611 by Flaminio Scala, who first published the outline or canvas of a series of these pieces, the dialogue being of course reserved for the ingenious performers.* This outline was not quite so short as that sometimes given in Italian play-bills; it explained the drift of each actor's part in the scene, but without any distinct hint of what he was to say. The construction of these fables is censured by Riccoboni as both weak and licentious; but it would not be reasonable to expect that it should be otherwise. The talent of the actors supplied the deficiency of writers. A certain quickness of wit, and tact in catching the shades of manner, comparatively rare among us, are widely diffused in Italy. It would be, we may well suspect, impossible to establish an extemporaneous theatre in England which should not be stupidly vulgar.† But Bergamo sent out many Harlequins, and

CHAP. VI.

Extemporaneous comedy.

composition, the parts in which having been hardly shadowed out were assigned to different actors who were to develop them in extemporaneous dialogue. Such a sketch was called a scenario, containing the subject of each scene, and those of Flaminio Scala were celebrated. Saggio Storico-Critico, p. 38. The pantomime, as it exists among us, is the descendant of this extemporaneous comedy, but with little of the wit and spirit of its progenitor.

* Salfi, p. 40.

† This is only meant as to dialogue and as to the public stage. The talent of a single actor, like the late Charles Mathews, is not an exception; but even the power of strictly extemporaneous comedy, with the agreeable poignancy that the minor theatre requires, is not wanting among some whose station and habits of life restrain its exercise to the most private circles.

CHAP. VI.

Venice many Pantalons. They were respected, as brilliant wit ought to be. The emperor Mathias ennobled Cecchini, a famous Harlequin, who was however a man of letters. These actors sometimes took the plot of old comedies as their outline, and disfigured them, so as hardly to be known, by their extemporaneous dialogue.*

Spanish stage.

6. Lope de Vega was at the height of his glory at the beginning of this century. Perhaps the majority of his dramas fall within it; but enough has been said on the subject in the last volume. His contemporaries and immediate successors were exceedingly numerous; the effulgence of dramatic literature in Spain corresponding exactly in time to that of England. Several are named by Bouterwek and Velasquez; but one only, Pedro Calderon de la Barca, must be permitted to arrest us. This celebrated man was born in 1600, and died in 1683. From an early age till after the middle of the century when he entered the church, he contributed, with a fertility only eclipsed by that of Lope, a long list of tragic, historic, comic, and tragi-comic dramas to the Spanish stage. In the latter period of his life, he

Calderon. Number of his pieces.

* Riccoboni, Hist. du Théatre Italien. Salfi, xii. 518. An elaborate disquisition on the extemporaneous comedy by Mr. Panizzi, in the Foreign Review for 1829, (not the Foreign Quarterly, but one early extinguished) derives it from the mimes and Atellanian comedies of ancient Italy, tracing them through the middle ages. The point seems sufficiently proved. The last company of performers in this old, though plebeian, family existed within about thirty years in Lombardy; a friend of mine at that time witnessed the last of the Harlequins. I need hardly say that this character was not a mere skipper over the stage, as we have seen him, but a very honest and lively young Bergamasque. The plays of Gasparo Gozzi, if plays they are, are mere hints to guide the wit of extemporaneous actors.

confined himself to the religious pieces, called Autos Sacramentales. Of these 97 are published in the collective edition of 1726, besides 127 of his regular plays. In one year, 1635, it is said that twelve of his comedies appeared. But the authenticity of so large a number has been questioned; he is said to have given a list of his sacred plays, at the age of eighty, consisting of only 68. No collection was published by himself. Some of his comedies, in the Spanish sense, it may be observed, turn more or less on religious subjects, as their titles show: El Purgatorio de San Patricio — La Devocion de la Cruz — Judas Maccabeus — La Cisma de Inghilterra. He did not dislike contemporary subjects. In El Sitio de Breda, we have Spinola, Nassau and others then living on the scene. Calderon's metre is generally trochaic, of eight or seven syllables, not always rhyming; but verses de arte mayor, as they were called, or anapæstic lines of eleven or twelve syllables, and also hendecasyllables frequently occur.

His comedies.

7. The comedies, those properly so called, *de capa y espada*, which represent manners, are full of incident, but not perhaps crowded so as to produce any confusion; the characters have nothing very salient, but express the sentiments of gentlemen with frankness and spirit. We find in every one a picture of Spain; gallantry, jealousy, quick resentment of insult, sometimes deep revenge. The language of Calderon is not unfrequently poetical, even in these lighter dramas, but hyperbolical figures and insipid conceits deform its beauty. The

CHAP. VI.

gracioso, or witty servant, is an unfailing personage; but I do not know, (my reading however being extremely limited) that Calderon displays much brilliancy or liveliness in his sallies.

8. The plays of Calderon required a good deal of theatrical apparatus, unless the good nature of the audience dispensed with it. But this kind of comedy must have led to scenical improvements. They seem to contain no indecency, nor do the intrigues ever become criminal, at least in effect; most of the ladies indeed are unmarried. Yet they have been severely censured by later critics on the score of their morality, which is no doubt that of the stage, but considerably purified in comparison with the Italian and French of the sixteenth century. Calderon seems to bear no resemblance to any English writer of his age, except, in a certain degree, to Beaumont and Fletcher. And as he wants their fertility of wit and humour, we cannot, I presume, place the best of his comedies on a level with even the second class of theirs. But I should speak perhaps with more reserve of an author, very few of whose plays I have read, and with whose language I am very imperfectly acquainted; nor should I have ventured so far, if the opinion of many European critics had not seemed to warrant my frigid character of one who has sometimes been so much applauded.

La Vida es Sueno.

9. La Vida es Sueno rises, in its subject as well as style, above the ordinary comedies of Calderon. Basilius, king of Poland, a deep philosopher, has by consulting the stars had the misfortune of ascertaining that his unborn son Sigismund would be

under some extraordinary influences of evil passion. He resolves in consequence to conceal his birth, and to bring him up in a horrible solitude, where, it hardly appears why, he is laden with chains, and covered with skins of beasts, receiving meantime an excellent education, and becoming able to converse on every subject, though destitute of all society but that of his keeper Clotaldo. The inheritance of the crown of Poland is supposed to have devolved on Astolfo, duke of Moscovy, or on his cousin Estrella, who, as daughter of an elder branch, contests it with him. The play opens by a scene, in which Rosaura, a Moscovite lady, who having been betrayed by Astolfo, has fled to Poland in man's attire, descends the almost impassable precipices which overhang the small castle wherein Sigismund is confined. This scene and that in which he first appears, are impressive and full of beauty, even now that we are become accustomed in excess to these theatrical wonders. Clotaldo discovers the prince in conversation with a stranger, who by the king's general order must be detained, and probably for death. A circumstance leads him to believe that this stranger is his son; but the Castilian loyalty transferred to Poland forbids him to hesitate in obeying his instructions. The king, however, who has fortunately determined to release his son, and try an experiment upon the force of the stars, coming in at this time, sets Rosaura at liberty.

10. In the next act Sigismund, who, by the help of a sleeping potion, has been conveyed to the palace, wakes in a bed of down, and in the midst

of royal splendour. He has little difficulty in understanding his new condition, but preserves a not unnatural resentment of his former treatment. The malign stars prevail; he treats Astolfo with the utmost arrogance, reviles and threatens his father, throws one of his servants out of the window, attempts the life of Clotaldo and the honour of Rosaura. The king, more convinced than ever of the truth of astrology, directs another soporific draught to be administered; and in the next scene we find the prince again in his prison. Clotaldo, once more at his side, persuades him that his late royalty has passed in a dream, wisely observing however that asleep or awake we should always do what is right.

11. Sigismund, after some philosophical reflections, prepares to submit to the sad reality which has displaced his vision. But in the third act, an unforeseen event recalls him to the world. The army, become acquainted with his rights, and indignant that the king should transfer them to Astolfo, break into his prison, and place him at their head. Clotaldo expects nothing but death. A new revolution, however, has taken place. Sigismund, corrected by the dismal consequences of giving way to passion in his former dream, and apprehending a similar waking once more, has suddenly overthrown the sway of the sinister constellations that had enslaved him; he becomes generous, mild, and master of himself; and the only pretext for his disinheritance being removed, it is easy that he should be reconciled to his father, that Astolfo, abandoning a kingdom he can no longer

claim, should espouse the injured Rosaura, and that the reformed prince should become the husband of Estrella. The incidents which chiefly relate to these latter characters, have been omitted in this slight analysis.

CHAP. VI.

12. This tragi-comedy presents a moral not so contemptible in the age of Calderon, as it may now appear; that the stars may influence our will, but do not oblige it. If we could extract an allegorical meaning from the chimeras of astrology, and deem the stars but names for the circumstances of birth and fortune which affect the character as well as condition of every man, but yield to the persevering energy of self-correction, we might see in this fable the shadow of a permanent and valuable truth. As a play it deserves considerable praise; the events are surprizing without excessive improbability, and succeed each other without confusion; the thoughts are natural and poetically expressed; and it requires on the whole less allowance for the different standard of national taste than is usual in the Spanish drama.

A Secreto agravio secreta vengança.

13. A Secreto agravio secreta vengança is a domestic tragedy which turns on a common story — a husband's revenge on one whom he erroneously believes to be still a favoured, and who had been once an accepted lover. It is something like Tancred and Sigismunda, except that the lover is killed instead of the husband. The latter puts him to death secretly, which gives name to the play. He afterwards sets fire to his own house, and in the confusion designedly kills his wife. A friend communicates the fact to his sovereign Se-

CHAP. VI.

bastian king of Portugal, who applauds what has been done. It is an atrocious play, and speaks terrible things as to the state of public sentiment in Spain, but abounds with interesting and touching passages.

Style of Calderon.

14. It has been objected to Calderon, and the following defence of Bouterwek seems very insufficient, that his servants converse in a poetical style like their masters. "The spirit, on these particular occasions," says that judicious but lenient critic, "must not be misunderstood. The servants in Calderon's comedies always imitate the language of their masters. In most cases they express themselves like the latter, in the natural language of real life, and often divested of that colouring of the ideas, without which a dramatic work ceases to be a poem. But whenever romantic gallantry speaks in the language of tenderness, admiration or flattery, then, according to Spanish custom, every idea becomes a metaphor; and Calderon, who was a thorough Spaniard, seized these opportunities to give the reins to his fancy, and to suffer it to take a bold lyric flight beyond the boundaries of nature. On such occasions the most extravagant metaphoric language, in the style of the Italian Marinists, did not appear unnatural to a Spanish audience; and even Calderon himself had for that style a particular fondness, to the gratification of which he sacrificed a chaster taste. It was his ambition to become a more refined Lope de Vega or a Spanish Marini. Thus in his play, Bien vengas mal, si vengas solo, a waiting maid, addressing her young mistress who has risen in a gay humour,

says—'Aurora would not have done wrong had she slumbered that morning in her snowy crystal, for that the sight of her mistress's charms would suffice to draw aside the curtains from the couch of Sol.' She adds that, using a Spanish idea, 'it might then indeed be said that the sun had risen in her lady's eyes.' Valets, on the like occasion, speak in the same style; and when lovers address compliments to their mistresses, and these reply in the same strain, the play of far-fetched metaphors is aggravated by antitheses to a degree which is intolerable to any but a Spanish-formed taste. But it must not be forgotten that this language of gallantry was in Calderon's time spoken by the fashionable world, and that it was a vernacular property of the ancient national poetry."* What is this but to confess that Calderon had not genius to raise himself above his age, and that he can be read only as a "Triton of the minnows;" one who is great but in comparison with his neighbours? It will not convert bad writing into good to tell us, as is perpetually done, that we must place ourselves in the author's position, and make allowances for the taste of his age, or the temper of his nation. All this is true, relatively to the author himself, and may be pleaded against a condemnation of his talents; but the excuse of the man is not that of the work.

His merits sometimes over-rated.

15. The fame of Calderon has been latterly revived in Europe through the praise of some

* P. 507. It has been ingeniously hinted in the Quarterly Review, vol. xxv., that the high-flown language of servants in Spanish dramas is a parody on that of their masters, and designed to make it ridiculous. But this is probably too refined an excuse.

German critics, but especially the unbounded panegyric of one of their greatest men, William Schlegel. The passage is well known for its brilliant eloquence. Every one must differ with reluctance and respect from this accomplished writer; and an Englishman, acknowledging with gratitude and admiration what Schlegel has done for the glory of Shakspeare, ought not to grudge the laurels he showers upon another head. It is however rather as a poet than a dramatist that Calderon has received this homage; and in his poetry, it seems to be rather bestowed on the mysticism, which finds a responsive chord in so many German hearts, than on what we should consider a more universal excellence, a sympathy with, and a power over all that is true and beautiful in nature and in man. Sismondi (but the distance between Weimar and Geneva in matters of taste is incomparably greater than by the public road) dissenting from this eulogy of Schlegel, which he fairly lays before the reader, stigmatizes Calderon as eminently the poet of the age wherein he lived, the age of Philip IV. Salfi goes so far as to say we can hardly read Calderon without indignation; since he seems to have had no view but to make his genius subservient to the lowest prejudices and superstitions of his country.* In the 25th volume of the Quarterly Review an elaborate and able critique on the plays of Calderon seems to have estimated him without prejudice on either side. "His boundless and inexhaustible fertility of invention, his quick power of seizing and prosecuting every thing

* Hist. Litt. de Ginguéné, vol. xii. p. 499.

with dramatic effect, the unfailing animal spirits of his dramas, if we may venture on the expression, the general loftiness and purity of his sentiments, the rich facility of his verse, the abundance of his language, and the clearness and precision with which he embodies his thoughts in words and figures, entitle him to a high rank as to the imagination and creative faculty of a poet, but we cannot consent to enrol him among the mighty masters of the human breast." * His total want of truth to nature, even the ideal nature which poetry embodies, justifies at least this sentence. "The wildest flights of Biron and Romeo," it is observed, "are tame to the heroes of Calderon; the Asiatic pomp of expression, the exuberance of metaphor, the perpetual recurrence of the same figures, which the poetry of Spain derived from its intercourse with the Arabian conquerors of the peninsula, are lavished by him in all their fulness. Every address of a lover to a mistress is thickly studded with stars and flowers; her looks are always nets of gold, her lips rubies, and her heart a rock, which the rivers of his tears attempt in vain to melt. In short the language of the heart is entirely abandoned for that of the fancy; the brilliant but false concetti which have infected the poetical literature of every country, and which have been universally exploded by pure taste, glitter in every page and intrude into every speech." †

* P. 24. † P. 14.

Sect. II.

ON THE FRENCH DRAMA.

Early French Dramatists of this Period — Corneille — His principal Tragedies — Rotrou.

Plays of Hardy.

16. Among the company who performed at the second theatre of Paris, that established in the Marais, was Hardy, who, like Shakspeare, uniting both arts, was himself the author of 600, or, as some say, 800 dramatic pieces. It is said that forty-one of these are extant in the collection of his works which I have never seen. Several of them were written, learned by heart, and represented within a week. His own inventions are the worst of all; his tragedies and tragi-comedies are borrowed with as close an adherence to the original text as possible from Homer or Plutarch or Cervantes. They have more incident than those of his predecessors, and are somewhat less absurd; but Hardy is a writer of little talent. The Marianne is the most tolerable of his tragedies. In these he frequently abandoned the chorus, and even where he introduces it, does not regularly close the act with an ode.*

17. In the comedies of Hardy, and in the many burlesque farces represented under Henry IV. and

* Fontenelle, Hist. du Théatre François (in Œuvres de Fontenelle, iii. 72.). Suard, Mélanges de Littérature, vol. iv.

Louis XIII., no regard was paid to decency, either in the language or the circumstances. Few persons of rank, especially ladies, attended the theatres.* These were first attracted by pastoral representations, of which Racan gave a successful example in his Artenice. It is hardly, however, to be called a drama.† But the stage being no longer abandoned to the populace, and a more critical judgment in French literature gaining ground, encouraged by Richelieu, who built a large room in his palace for the representation of Mirame, an indifferent tragedy, part of which was suspected to be his own ‡, the ancient theatre began to be studied, rules were laid down and partially observed, a perfect decorum replaced the licentiousness and gross language of the old writers. Mairet and Rotrou, though without rising, in their first plays, much above Hardy, just served to prepare the way for the father and founder of the national theatre.§

18. The Melite of Corneille, his first production, was represented in 1629, when he was twenty-three years of age. This is only distinguished, as

* Suard, p. 134. Rotrou boasts that since he wrote for the theatre, it had become so well regulated that respectable women might go to it with as little scruple as to the Luxembourg garden. Corneille however, has in general the credit of having purified the stage; after his second piece, Clitandre, he admitted nothing licentious in his comedies. The only remain of grossness, Fontenelle observes, was that the lovers *se tutoyoient;* but as he gravely goes on to remark; le tutoiement ne choque pas les bonnes mœurs; il ne choque que la politesse et la vraie galanterie. p. 91. But the last instance of this heinous offence is in Le Menteur.

† Suard, ubi suprà.

‡ Fontenelle, p. 84. 96.

§ Id. p 78. It is difficult in France, as it is with us, to ascertain the date of plays, because they were often represented for years before they came from the press. It is conjectured by Fontenelle that one or two pieces of Mairet and Rotrou may have preceded any by Corneille.

CHAP. VI.

some say, from those of Hardy by a greater vigour of style; but Fontenelle gives a very different opinion. It had at least a success which caused a new troop of actors to be established in the Marais. His next, Clitandre, it is agreed, is not so good. But La Veuve is much better; irregular in action, but with spirit, character and well-invented situations, it is the first model of the higher comedy.* These early comedies must in fact have been relatively of considerable merit, since they raised Corneille to high reputation, and connected him with the literary men of his time. The Medea, though much borrowed from Seneca, gave a tone of grandeur and dignity unknown before to French tragedy. This appeared in 1635, and was followed by the Cid next year.

The Cid.

19. Notwithstanding the defence made by La Harpe, I cannot but agree with the French Academy, in their criticism on this play, that the subject is essentially ill-chosen. No circumstances can be imagined, no skill can be employed, that will reconcile the mind to the marriage of a daughter with one that has shed her father's blood. And the law of unity of time, which crowds every event of the drama within a few hours, renders the promised consent of Chimène (for such it is) to this union still more revolting and improbable.† The knowledge of this termination re-acts on the

* Suard. Fontenelle. La Harpe.

† La Harpe has said that Chimène does not promise at last to marry Rodrigue, though the spectator perceives that she will do so. He forgets that she has commissioned her lover's sword in the duel with Don Sancho :

Sors vainqueur d'un combat dont Chimène est le prix.—Act v. sc. 1.

reader during a second perusal, so as to give an irresistible impression of her insincerity in her previous solicitations for his death. She seems indeed, in several passages, little else than a tragic coquette, and one of the most odious kind.* The English stage at that time was not exempt from great violations of nature and decorum; yet had the subject of the Cid fallen into the hands of Beaumont and Fletcher, and it is one which they would have willingly selected, for the sake of the effective situations and contrasts of passion it affords, the part of Chimène would have been managed by them with great warmth and spirit, though probably not less incongruity and extravagance; but I can scarcely believe that the conclusion would have been so much in the style of comedy. Her death, or retirement into a monastery, would have seemed more consonant to her own dignity and to that of a tragic subject. Corneille was however borne out by the tradition of Spain, and by the authority of Guillen de Castro whom he imitated.

Style of Corneille.

20. The language of Corneille is elevated, his sentiments, if sometimes hyperbolical, generally noble, when he has not to deal with the passion of love; conscious of the nature of his own powers,

* In these lines, for example, of the third act, scene 4th:—

Malgré les feux si beaux qui rompent ma colère,
Je ferai mon possible à bien venger mon père;
Mais malgré la rigueur d'un si cruel devoir,
Mon unique souhait est de ne rien pouvoir.

It is true that he found this in his Spanish original, but that does not render the imitation judicious, or the sentiment either moral, or even theatrically specious.

CHAP. VI.

he has avoided subjects wherein this must entirely predominate; it was to be, as he thought, an accessory but never a principal source of dramatic interest. In this, however, as a general law of tragedy, he was mistaken; love is by no means unfit for the chief source of tragic distress, but comes in generally with a cold and feeble effect as a subordinate emotion. In those Roman stories he most affected, its expression could hardly be otherwise than insipid and incongruous. Corneille probably would have dispensed with it like Shakspeare in Coriolanus and Julius Cæsar; but the taste of his contemporaries, formed in the pedantic school of romance, has imposed fetters on his genius in almost every drama. In the Cid, where the subject left him no choice, he has perhaps succeeded better in the delineation of love than on any other occasion; yet even here we often find the cold exaggerations of complimentary verse, instead of the voice of nature. But other scenes of this play, especially in the first act, which bring forward the proud Castilian characters of the two fathers of Rodrigo and Chimène, are full of the nervous eloquence of Corneille; and the general style, though it may not have borne the fastidious criticism either of the Academy or of Voltaire, is so far above any thing which had been heard on the French stage, that it was but a very frigid eulogy in the former to say that it "had acquired a considerable reputation among works of the kind." It had at that time astonished Paris; but the prejudices of Cardinal Richelieu and the envy of inferior authors, joined

perhaps to the proverbial unwillingness of critical bodies to commit themselves by warmth of praise, had some degree of influence on the judgment which the Academy pronounced on the Cid, though I do not think it was altogether so unjust and uncandid as has sometimes been supposed.

Les Horaces.

21. The next tragedy of Corneille, Les Horaces, is hardly open to less objection than the Cid; not so much because there is, as the French critics have discovered, a want of unity in the subject, which I do not quite perceive, nor because the fifth act is tedious and uninteresting, as from the repulsiveness of the story, and the jarring of the sentiments with our natural sympathies. Corneille has complicated the legend in Livy with the marriage of the younger Horatius to the sister of the Curiatii, and thus placed his two female personages in a nearly similar situation, which he has taken little pains to diversify by any contrast in their characters. They speak, on the contrary, nearly in the same tone, and we see no reason why the hero of the tragedy should not, as he seems half disposed, have followed up the murder of his sister by that of his wife. More skill is displayed in the opposition of character between the combatants themselves; but the mild, though not less courageous or patriotic, Curiatius attaches the spectator, who cares nothing for the triumph of Rome, or the glory of the Horatian name. It must be confessed that the elder Horatius is nobly conceived; the Roman energy, of which we find but a caricature in his brutish son, shines out in him with an admirable dramatic spirit. I shall be

CHAP. VI.

accused, nevertheless, of want of taste, when I confess that his celebrated *Qu'il mourût*, has always seemed to me less eminently sublime than the general suffrage of France has declared it. There is nothing very novel or striking in the proposition, that a soldier's duty is to die in the field rather than desert his post by flight; and in a tragedy full of the hyperboles of Roman patriotism, it appears strange that we should be astonished at that which is the principle of all military honour. The words are emphatic in their position, and calculated to draw forth the actor's energy; but this is an artifice of no great skill; and one can hardly help thinking, that a spectator in the pit would spontaneously have anticipated the answer of a warlike father to the feminine question,

Que vouliez-vous qu'il fît contre trois?

The style of this tragedy is reckoned by the critics superior to that of the Cid; the nervousness and warmth of Corneille is more displayed; and it is more free from incorrect and trivial expression.

Cinna.

22. Cinna, the next in order of time, is probably that tragedy of Corneille which would be placed at the head by a majority of suffrages. His eloquence reached here its highest point; the speeches are longer, more vivid in narration, more philosophical in argument, more abundant in that strain of Roman energy, which he had derived chiefly from Lucan, more emphatic and condensed in their language and versification. But, as a drama, this is deserving of little praise; the characters of Cinna and Maximus are contemptible,

that of Emilia is treacherous and ungrateful. She is indeed the type of a numerous class who have followed her in works of fiction, and sometimes, unhappily, in real life; the female patriot, theoretically, at least, an assassin, but commonly compelled, by the iniquity of the times, to console herself in practice with safer transgressions. We have had some specimens; and other nations, to their shame and sorrow, have had more. But even the magnanimity of Augustus, whom we have not seen exposed to instant danger, is uninteresting, nor do we perceive why he should bestow his friendship as well as his forgiveness on the detected traitor that cowers before him. It is one of those subjects, which might, by the invention of a more complex plot than history furnishes, have better excited the spectator's attention, but not his sympathy.

Polyeucte.

23. A deeper interest belongs to Polyeucte; and this is the only tragedy of Corneille wherein he affects the heart. There is indeed a certain incongruity which we cannot overcome between the sanctity of Christian martyrdom and the language of love, especially when the latter is rather the more prominent of the two in the conduct of the drama.* But the beautiful character of Pauline would redeem much greater defects than can be ascribed to this tragedy. It is the noblest, perhaps, on the French stage, and conceived with

* The coterie at the Hôtel Rambouillet thought that Polyeucte would not succeed, on account of its religious character. Corneille, it is said, was about to withdraw his tragedy, but was dissuaded by an actor of so little reputation that he did not even bear a part in the performance. Fontenelle, p. 101.

CHAP. VI.

admirable delicacy and dignity.* In the style, however, of Polyeucte, there seems to be some return towards the languid tone of common-place which had been wholly thrown off in Cinna. †

Rodogune

24. Rodogune is said to have been a favourite with the author. It can hardly be so with the generality of his readers. The story has all the atrocity of the older school, from which Corneille had emancipated the stage. It borders even on ridicule. Two princes, kept by their mother, one of those furies whom our own Webster or Marston would have delighted to draw, in ignorance which is the elder, and consequently entitled to the throne, are enamoured of Rodogune. Their mother makes it a condition of declaring the succession, that they shall shed the blood of this princess. Struck with horror at such a proposition, they refer their passion to the choice of Rodogune, who, in her turn, demands the death of their mother. The embarrassment of these amiable youths may be conceived. La Harpe extols the fifth act of this tragedy, and it may perhaps be effective in representation.

* Fontenelle thinks that it shows "un grand attachement à son devoir, et un grand caractère" in Pauline to desire that Severus should save her husband's life, instead of procuring the latter to be executed that she might marry her lover. Réflexions sur la Poétique, sect. 16. This is rather an odd notion of what is sufficient to constitute an heroic character. It is not the conduct of Pauline, which in every Christian or virtuous woman must naturally be the same, but the fine sentiments and language which accompany it, that render her part so noble.

† In the second scene of the second act, between Severus and Pauline, two characters of the most elevated class, the former quits the stage with this line; Adieu, trop vertueux objet, et trop charmant. The latter replies; Adieu, trop malheureux, et trop parfait amant.

Pompey.

25. Pompey, sometimes inaccurately called the Death of Pompey, is more defective in construction than even any other tragedy of Corneille. The hero, if Pompey is such, never appears on the stage, and his death being recounted at the beginning of the second act, the real subject of the piece, so far as it can be said to have one, is the punishment of his assassins; a retribution demanded by the moral sense of the spectator, but hardly important enough for dramatic interest. The character of Cæsar is somewhat weakened by his passion for Cleopatra, which assumes more the tone of devoted gallantry than truth or probability warrant; but Cornelia, though with some Lucanic extravagance, is full of a Roman nobleness of spirit, which renders her, after Pauline, but at a long interval, the finest among the female characters of Corneille. The language is not beneath that of his earlier tragedies.

Heraclius.

26. In Heraclius we begin to find an inferiority of style. Few passages, especially after the first act, are written with much vigour; and the plot, instead of the faults we may ascribe to some of the former dramas, a too great simplicity and want of action, offends by the perplexity of its situations, and still more by their nature; since they are wholly among the proper resources of comedy. The true and the false Heraclius, each uncertain of his paternity, each afraid to espouse one who may or may not be his sister, the embarrassment of Phocas, equally irritated by both, but aware that in putting either to death, he may punish his own son, the art of Leontine who pro-

CHAP. VI.

duces this confusion, not by silence but by a series of inconsistent falsehoods, all these are in themselves ludicrous, and such as in comedy could produce no other effect than laughter.

Nicomède.

27. Nicomède is generally placed by the critics below Heraclius, an opinion in which I should hardly concur. The plot is feeble and improbable, but more tolerable than the strange entanglements of Heraclius; and the spirit of Corneille shines out more in the characters and sentiments. None of his later tragedies deserve much notice, except that we find one of his celebrated scenes in Sertorius, a drama of little general merit. Nicomède and Sertorius were both first represented after the middle of the century.

Faults and and beauties of Corneille.

28. Voltaire has well distinguished the fine scenes of Corneille, and the fine tragedies of Racine. It can perhaps hardly be said that, with the exception of Polyeucte, the former has produced a single play, which, taken as a whole, we can commend. The keys of the passions were not given to his custody. But in that which he introduced upon the French stage, and which long continued to be its boast, impressive energetic declamation, thoughts masculine, bold, and sometimes sublime, conveyed in a style for the most part clear, condensed, and noble, and in a rhythm sonorous and satisfactory to the ear, he has not since been equalled. Lucan, it has always been said, was the favourite study of Corneille. No one indeed can admire one who has not a strong relish for the other. That the tragedian has ever surpassed the highest flights of his Roman prototype, it might be

difficult to prove; but if his fire is not more intense, it is accompanied by less smoke; his hyperboles, for such he has, are less frequent and less turgid; his taste is more judicious, he knows better, especially in description, what to chuse and where to stop. Lucan however would have disdained the politeness of the amorous heroes of Corneille, and though often tedious, often offensive to good taste, is never languid or ignoble.

Le Menteur.

29. The first French comedy written in polite language without low wit or indecency, is due to Corneille, or rather, in some degree, to the Spanish author whom he copied in Le Menteur. This has been improved a little by Goldoni, and our own well-known farce, The Liar, is borrowed from both. The incidents are diverting, but it belongs to the subordinate class of comedy, and a better moral would have been shown in the disgrace of the principal character. Another comedy about the same time, Le Pedant Joué, by Cyrano de Bergerac, had much success. It has been called the first comedy in prose, and the first wherein a provincial dialect is introduced; the remark, as to the former circumstance, shows a forgetfulness of Larivey. Molière has borrowed freely from this play.

Other French tragedies.

30. The only tragedies, after those of Corneille, anterior to 1650, which the French themselves hold worthy of remembrance, are the Sophonisbe of Mairet; in which some characters and some passages are vigorously conceived, but the style is debased by low and ludicrous thoughts, which

CHAP. VI.

later critics never fail to point out with severity*; the Scevole of Duryer, the best of several good tragedies, full of lines of great simplicity in expression, but which seem to gain force by their simplicity, by one who, though never sublime, adopted with success the severe and reasoning style of Corneille†; the Marianne of Tristan, which, at its appearance in 1637, passed for a rival of the Cid, and remained for a century on the stage, but is now ridiculed for a style alternately turgid and ludicrous; and the Wenceslas of Rotrou, which had not ceased thirty years since to be represented, and perhaps is so still.

Wenceslas of Rotrou.

31. This tragedy, the best work of a fertile dramatist, who did himself honour by a ready acknowledgment of the superiority of Corneille, instead of canvassing the suffrages of those who always envy genius, is by no means so much below that great master, as, in the unfortunate efforts of his later years, he was below himself. Wenceslas was represented in 1647. It may be admitted that Rotrou had conceived his plot, which is wholly original, in the spirit of Corneille; the masculine energy of the sentiments, the delineation of bold and fierce passions, of noble and heroic love, the attempt even at political philosophy, are copies of that model. It seems indeed that in several scenes Rotrou must, out of mere generosity to Corneille, have determined to out-do one of his most exceptionable passages, the consent of Chimène to espouse the Cid. His own curtain drops

* Suard, ubi suprà.

† Suard, p. 196.

on the vanishing reluctance of his heroine to accept the hand of a monster whom she hated, and who had just murdered her lover in his own brother. It is the Lady Anne of Shakspeare; but Lady Anne is not a heroine. Wenceslas is not unworthy of comparison with the second class of Corneille's tragedies. But the ridiculous tone of language and sentiment, which the heroic romance had rendered popular, and from which Corneille did not wholly emancipate himself, often appears in this piece of Rotrou; the intrigue is rather too complex, in the Spanish style, for tragedy; the diction seems frequently obnoxious to the most indulgent criticism; but above all the story is essentially ill contrived, ending in the grossest violation of poetical justice ever witnessed on the stage, the impunity and even the triumph of one of the worst characters that was ever drawn.

SECT. III.

ON THE ENGLISH DRAMA.

London Theatres — Shakspeare — Jonson — Beaumont and Fletcher — Massinger — Other English Dramatists.

Popularity of the stage under Elizabeth.

32. THE English drama had been encouraged through the reign of Elizabeth by increasing popularity, notwithstanding the strenuous opposition

of a party sufficiently powerful to enlist the magistracy, and, in a certain measure, the government on its side. A progressive improvement in dramatic writing, possibly also, though we know less of this, in the skill of the actors, ennobled, while it kept alive, the public taste; the crude and insipid compositions of an Edwards or a Whetstone, among numbers more whose very names are lost, gave way to the real genius of Greene and Marlowe, and after them, to Shakspeare.

Number of theatres.

33. At the beginning of this century, not less than eleven regular play-houses had been erected in London and its suburbs; several of which, it appears, were still in use, an order of the privy council in 1600, restraining the number to two being little regarded. Of these the most important was that of the Black Friars, with which another, called the Globe, on the opposite side of the river, was connected; the same company performing at the former in winter, at the latter in summer. This was the company of which Burbage, the best actor of the day, was chief, and to which Shakspeare, who was also a proprietor, belonged. Their names appear in letters patent, and other legal instruments.*

Encouraged by James.

34. James was fond of these amusements, and had encouraged them in Scotland. The puritan

* Shakspeare probably retired from the stage, as a performer, soon after 1603; his name appears among the actors of Sejanus in 1603, but not among those of Volpone in 1605. There is a tradition that James I. wrote a letter thanking Shakspeare for the compliment paid to him in Macbeth. Malone, it seems, believed this: Mr. Collier does not, and probably most people will be equally sceptical. Collier, i. 370.

influence, which had been sometimes felt in the council of Elizabeth, came speedily to an end; though the representation of plays on Sundays, a constant theme of complaint, but never wholly put down, was now abandoned, and is not even tolerated by the declaration of sports. The several companies of players, who, in her reign, had been under the nominal protection of some men of rank, were now denominated the servants of the king, the queen, or other royal personages.* They were relieved from some of the vexatious control they had experienced, and subjected only to the gentle sway of the Master of the Revels. It was his duty to revise all dramatic works before they were represented, to exclude profane and unbecoming language, and specially to take care that there should be no interference with matters of state. The former of these functions must have been rather laxly exercised; but there are instances in which a licence was refused on account of very recent history being touched in a play.

General taste for the stage.

35. The reigns of James and Charles were the glory of our theatre. Public applause, and the favour of princes, were well bestowed on those bright stars of our literature who then appeared. In 1623, when Sir Henry Herbert became Master

* Id. p. 347. But the privilege of peers to grant licences to itinerant players, given by statute 14 Eliz. c. 5., and 39 Eliz. c. 4., was taken away by 1 Jac. I. c. 7., so that they became liable to be treated as vagrants. Accordingly there were no established theatres in any provincial city, and strollers, though dear to the lovers of the buskin, were always obnoxious to grave magistrates. The licence, however, granted to Burbage, Shakspeare, Hemmings and others in 1603 authorizes them to act plays not only at the usual house, but in any other part of the kingdom. Burbage was reckoned the best actor of his time, and excelled as Richard III.

CHAP. VI.

of the Revels, there were five companies of actors in London. This indeed is something less than at the accession of James, and the latest historian of the drama suggests the increase of puritanical sentiments as a likely cause of this apparent decline. But we find little reason to believe that there was any decline in the public taste for the theatre; and it may be as probable an hypothesis, that the excess of competition, at the end of Elizabeth's reign, had rendered some undertakings unprofitable; the greater fishes, as usual in such cases, swallowing up the less. We learn from Howes the continuator of Stow, that within sixty years before 1631 seventeen play-houses had been built in the metropolis. These were now larger and more convenient than before. They were divided into public and private; not that the former epithet was inapplicable to both; but those styled public were not completely roofed, nor well provided with seats, nor were the performances by candle-light; they resembled more the rude booths we still see at fairs, or the constructions in which interludes are represented by day in Italy; while private theatres, such as that of the Black Friars, were built in nearly the present form. It seems to be the more probable opinion that moveable scenery was unknown on these theatres. "It is a fortunate circumstance," Mr. Collier has observed, "for the poetry of our old plays that it was so; the imagination of the auditor only was appealed to; and we owe to the absence of painted canvas many of the finest descriptive passages in Shakspeare, his

contemporaries and immediate followers. The introduction of scenery gives the date to the commencement of the decline of our dramatic poetry." In this remark, which seems as original as just, I entirely concur. Even in this age the prodigality of our theatre in its peculiar boast, scene-painting, can hardly keep pace with the creative powers of Shakspeare; it is well that he did not live when a manager was to estimate his descriptions by the cost of realizing them on canvas, or we might never have stood with Lear on the cliffs of Dover, or amidst the palaces of Venice with Shylock and Antonio. The scene is perpetually changed in our old drama, precisely because it was not changed at all. A powerful argument might otherwise have been discovered in favour of the unity of place, that it is very cheap.

Theatres closed by the parliament.

36. Charles as we might expect, was not less inclined to this liberal pleasure than his predecessors. It was to his own cost that Prynne assaulted the stage in his immense volume, the Histrio-mastix. Even Milton, before the foul spirit had wholly entered into him, extolled the learned sock of Jonson, and the wild wood-notes of Shakspeare. But these days were soon to pass away; the ears of Prynne were avenged; by an order of the two houses of parliament, Sept. 2. 1642, the theatres were closed, as a becoming measure during the season of public calamity and impending civil war; but, after some unsuccessful attempts to evade this prohibition, it was thought expedient, in the complete success of the party

CHAP. VI.

who had always abhorred the drama, to put a stop to it altogether; and another ordinance of Jan. 22. 1648, reciting the usual objections to all such entertainments, directed the theatres to be rendered unserviceable. We must refer the reader to the valuable work which has supplied the sketch of these pages for further knowledge*; it is more our province to follow the track of those who most distinguished a period so fertile in dramatic genius; and first that of the greatest of them all.

Shakspeare's Twelfth Night.

37. Those who originally undertook to marshal the plays of Shakspeare according to chronological order, always attending less to internal evidence than to the very fallible proofs of publication they could obtain, placed Twelfth Night last of all, in 1612 or 1613. It afterwards rose a little higher in the list; but Mr. Collier has finally proved that it was on the stage early in 1602, and was at that time chosen, probably as rather a new piece, for representation at one of the Inns of Court.† The general style resembles, in my judgment, that of Much Ado about Nothing, which is referred with probability to the year 1600. Twelfth Night, notwithstanding some very beautiful passages, and the humorous absurdity of Malvolio, has not the coruscations of wit and spirit of character that distinguish the excellent comedy it seems to have

* I have made no particular references to Mr. Collier's *double* work, The History of English Dramatic Poetry, and Annals of the Stage; it will be necessary for the reader to make use of his index; but few books lately published contain so much valuable and original information, though not entirely arranged in the most convenient manner. He seems nevertheless to have obligations to Dodsley's preface to his Collection of Old Plays, or rather perhaps to Reed's edition of it.

† Vol. i. p. 327.

immediately followed; nor is the plot nearly so well constructed. Viola would be more interesting, if she had not indelicately, as well as unfairly towards Olivia, determined to win the Duke's heart before she had seen him. The part of Sebastian has all that improbability which belongs to mistaken identity, without the comic effect for the sake of which that is forgiven in Plautus and in the Comedy of Errors.

Merry Wives of Windsor.

38. The Merry Wives of Windsor is that work of Shakspeare in which he has best displayed English manners; for though there is something of this in the historical plays, yet we rarely see in them such a picture of actual life as comedy ought to represent. It may be difficult to say for what cause he has abstained from a source of gaiety whence his prolific invention and keen eye for the diversities of character might have drawn so much. The Masters Knowell and Well-born, the young gentlemen who spend their money freely and make love to rich widows, an insipid race of personages, it must be owned, recur for ever in the old plays of James's reign; but Shakspeare threw an ideality over this class of characters, the Bassanios, the Valentines, the Gratianos, and placed them in scenes which neither by dress nor manners recalled the prose of ordinary life.* In this play however the English gentleman, in age and youth, is brought

* "No doubt," says Coleridge, "they (Beaumont and Fletcher) imitated the case of gentlemanly conversation better than Shakspeare, who was unable not to be too much *associated* to succeed in this." Table Talk, ii. 396. I am not quite sure that I understand this expression; but probably the meaning is not very different from what I have said.

CHAP. VI.

upon the stage, slightly caricatured in Shallow, and far more so in Slender. The latter indeed is a perfect satire, and I think was so intended, on the brilliant youth of the provinces, such as we may believe it to have been before the introduction of newspapers and turnpike roads, awkward and boobyish among civil people, but at home in rude sports, and proud of exploits at which the town would laugh, yet perhaps with more courage and good-nature than the laughers. No doubt can be raised that the family of Lucy is ridiculed in Shallow; but those who have had recourse to the old fable of the deer-stealing, forget that Shakspeare never lost sight of his native county, and went, perhaps every summer, to Stratford. It is not impossible that some arrogance of the provincial squires towards a player, whom, though a gentleman by birth and the recent grant of arms, they might not reckon such, excited his malicious wit to those admirable delineations.

39. The Merry Wives of Windsor was first printed in 1602, but very materially altered in a subsequent edition. It is wholly comic; so that Dodd, who published the Beauties of Shakspeare, confining himself to poetry, says it is the only play which afforded him nothing to extract. This play does not excite a great deal of interest; for Anne Page is but a sample of a character not very uncommon, which under a garb of placid and decorous mediocrity is still capable of pursuing its own will. But in wit and humorous delineation no other goes beyond it. If Falstaff seems, as Johnson has intimated, to have lost some of his

powers of merriment, it is because he is humiliated to a point where even his invention and impudence cannot bear him off victorious. In the first acts he is still the same Jack Falstaff of the Boar's Head. Jonson's earliest comedy, Every Man in his Humour, had appeared a few years before the Merry Wives of Windsor; they both turn on English life in the middle classes, and on the same passion of jealousy. If then we compare these two productions of our greatest comic dramatists, the vast superiority of Shakspeare will appear undeniable. Kitely indeed has more energy, more relief, more perhaps of what might appear to his temper matter for jealousy, than the wretched narrow-minded Ford; he is more of a gentleman and commands a certain degree of respect; but dramatic justice is better dealt upon Ford by rendering him ridiculous, and he suits better the festive style of Shakspeare's most amusing play. His light-hearted wife on the other hand is drawn with more spirit than Dame Kitely; and the most ardent admirer of Jonson would not oppose Master Stephen to Slender or Bobadil to Falstaff. The other characters are not parallel enough to admit of comparison; but in their diversity, (nor is Shakspeare perhaps in any one play more fertile) and their amusing peculiarity, as well as in the construction and arrangement of the story, the brilliancy of the wit, the perpetual gaiety of the dialogue, we perceive at once to whom the laurel must be given. Nor is this comparison instituted to disparage Jonson, whom we have praised, and shall have again to praise so highly,

CHAP. VI.

but to show how much easier it was to vanquish the rest of Europe than to contend with Shakspeare.

Measure for Measure.

40. Measure for Measure, commonly referred to the end of 1603, is perhaps, after Hamlet, Lear and Macbeth, the play in which Shakspeare struggles, as it were, most with the over-mastering power of his own mind; the depths and intricacies of being which he has searched and sounded with intense reflection, perplex and harass him; his personages arrest their course of action to pour forth, in language the most remote from common use, thoughts which few could grasp in the clearest expression; and thus he loses something of dramatic excellence in that of his contemplative philosophy. The Duke is designed as the representative of this philosophical character. He is stern and melancholy by temperament, averse to the exterior shows of power, and secretly conscious of some unfitness for its practical duties. The subject is not very happily chosen, but artfully improved by Shakspeare. In most of the numerous stories of a similar nature, which before or since his time have been related, the sacrifice of chastity is really made, and made in vain. There is however something too coarse and disgusting in such a story; and it would have deprived him of a splendid exhibition of character. The virtue of Isabella, inflexible and independent of circumstance, has something very grand and elevated; yet one is disposed to ask, whether, if Claudio had been really executed, the spectator would not have gone away with no great affection for her; and at

least we now feel that her reproaches against her miserable brother when he clings to life like a frail and guilty being, are too harsh. There is great skill in the invention of Mariana, and without this the story could not have had any thing like a satisfactory termination; yet it is never explained how the Duke had become acquainted with this secret, and being acquainted with it, how he had preserved his esteem and confidence in Angelo. His intention, as hinted towards the end, to marry Isabella, is a little too common-place; it is one of Shakspeare's hasty half-thoughts. The language of this comedy is very obscure, and the text seems to have been printed with great inaccuracy. I do not value the comic parts highly; Lucio's impudent profligacy, the result rather of sensual debasement than of natural ill disposition, is well represented; but Elbow is a very inferior repetition of Dogberry. In dramatic effect Measure for Measure ranks high; the two scenes between Isabella and Angelo, that between her and Claudio, those where the Duke appears in disguise, and the catastrophe in the fifth act are admirably written and very interesting; except so far as the spectator's knowledge of the two stratagems which have deceived Angelo may prevent him from participating in the indignation at Isabella's imaginary wrong which her lamentations would excite. Several of the circumstances and characters are borrowed from the old play of Whetstone, Promos and Cassandra; but very little of the sentiments or language. What is good in Measure for Measure is Shakspeare's own.

CHAP. VI.

Lear.

41. If originality of invention did not so much stamp almost every play of Shakspeare that to name one as the most original seems a disparagement to others, we might say that this great prerogative of genius was exercised above all in Lear. It diverges more from the model of regular tragedy than Macbeth or Othello, and even more than Hamlet; but the fable is better constructed than in the last of these, and it displays full as much of the almost super-human inspiration of the poet as the other two. Lear himself is perhaps the most wonderful of dramatic conceptions, ideal to satisfy the most romantic imagination, yet idealized from the reality of nature. In preparing us for the most intense sympathy with this old man, he first abases him to the ground; it is not Œdipus, against whose respected age the gods themselves have conspired; it is not Orestes, noble minded and affectionate, whose crime has been virtue; it is a headstrong feeble and selfish being, whom, in the first act of the tragedy, nothing seems capable of redeeming in our eyes; nothing but what follows, intense woe, unnatural wrong. Then comes on that splendid madness, not absurdly sudden, as in some tragedies, but in which the strings that keep his reasoning power together give way one after the other in the frenzy of rage and grief. Then it is that we find what in life may sometimes be seen, the intellectual energies grow stronger in calamity, and especially under wrong. An awful eloquence belongs to unmerited suffering. Thoughts burst out, more profound than Lear in his prosperous hour could

ever have conceived; inconsequent, for such is the condition of madness, but in themselves fragments of coherent truth, the reason of an unreasonable mind.

CHAP. VI.

Timon of Athens.

42. Timon of Athens is cast as it were in the same mould as Lear; it is the same essential character, the same generosity more from wanton ostentation than love of others, the same fierce rage under the smart of ingratitude, the same rousing up, in that tempest, of powers that had slumbered unsuspected in some deep recess of the soul; for had Timon or Lear known that philosophy of human nature in their calmer moments which fury brought forth, they would never have had such terrible occasion to display it. The thoughtless confidence of Lear in his children has something in it far more touching than the self-beggary of Timon; though both one and the other have prototypes enough in real life. And as we give the old king more of our pity, so a more intense abhorrence accompanies his daughters and the worse characters of that drama, than we spare for the miserable sycophants of the Athenian. Their thanklessness is anticipated, and springs from the very nature of their calling; it verges on the beaten road of comedy. In this play there is neither a female personage, except two courtezans, who hardly speak, nor any prominent character, (the honest steward is not such) redeemed by virtue enough to be estimable; for the cynic Apemantus is but a cynic, and ill replaces the noble Kent of the other drama. The fable, if fable it can be called, is so extraordinarily deficient in

CHAP. VI.

action, a fault of which Shakspeare is not guilty in any other instance, that we may wonder a little how he should have seen in the single delineation of Timon a counter-balance for the manifold objections to this subject. But there seems to have been a period of Shakspeare's life when his heart was ill at ease, and ill content with the world or his own conscience; the memory of hours mis-spent, the pang of affection mis-placed or unrequited, the experience of man's worser nature, which intercourse with ill-chosen associates, by choice or circumstance, peculiarly teaches; — these, as they sank down into the depths of his great mind, seem not only to have inspired into it the conception of Lear and Timon, but that of one primary character, the censurer of mankind. This type is first seen in the philosophic melancholy of Jaques, gazing with an undiminished serenity, and with a gaiety of fancy, though not of manners, on the follies of the world. It assumes a graver cast in the exiled Duke of the same play, and next one rather more severe in the Duke of Measure for Measure. In all these however it is merely contemplative philosophy. In Hamlet this is mingled with the impulses of a perturbed heart under the pressure of extraordinary circumstances; it shines no longer, as in the former characters, with a steady light, but plays in fitful coruscations amidst feigned gaiety and extravagance. In Lear it is the flash of sudden inspiration across the incongruous imagery of madness; in Timon it is obscured by the exaggerations of misanthropy. These plays all belong to nearly the same

period: As you Like It being usually referred to 1600, Hamlet, in its altered form, to about 1602, Timon to the same year, Measure for Measure to 1603, and Lear to 1604. In the later plays of Shakspeare, especially in Macbeth and the Tempest, much of moral speculation will be found, but he has never returned to this type of character in the personages. Timon is less read and less pleasing than the great majority of Shakspeare's plays; but it abounds with signs of his genius. Schlegel observes that of all his works it is that which has most satire; comic in representation of the parasites, indignant and Juvenalian in the bursts of Timon himself.

Pericles.

43. Pericles is generally reckoned to be in part, and only in part, the work of Shakspeare. From the poverty and bad management of the fable, the want of any effective or distinguishable character, for Marina is no more than the common form of female virtue, such as all the dramatists of that age could draw, and a general feebleness of the tragedy as a whole, I should not believe the structure to have been Shakspeare's. But many passages are far more in his manner than in that of any contemporary writer with whom I am acquainted; and the extrinsic testimony, though not conclusive, being of some value, I should not dissent from the judgment of Steevens and Malone, that it was, in no inconsiderable degree, repaired and improved by his touch. Drake has placed it under the year 1590, as the earliest of Shakspeare's plays, for no better reason, apparently, than that he thought it inferior to all the rest.

But if, as most will agree, it were not quite his own, this reason will have less weight; and the language seems to me rather that of his second or third manner than of his first. Pericles is not known to have existed before 1609.

44. The majority of readers, I believe, assign to Macbeth, which seems to have been written about 1606, the pre-eminence among the works of Shakspeare; many, however, would rather name Othello, one of his latest, which is referred to 1611; and a few might prefer Lear to either. The great epic drama, as the first may be called, deserves, in my own judgment, the post it has attained, as being, in the language of Drake, "the greatest effort of our author's genius, the most sublime and impressive drama which the world has ever beheld." It will be observed that Shakspeare had now turned his mind towards the tragic drama. No tragedy but Romeo and Juliet belongs to the sixteenth century; ten, without counting Pericles, appeared in the first eleven years of the present. It is not my design to distinguish each of his plays separately; and it will be evident that I pass over some of the greatest. No writer in fact is so well known as Shakspeare, or has been so abundantly, and, on the whole, so ably criticized; I might have been warranted in saying even less than I have done.

His Roman tragedies. Julius Cæsar.

45. Shakspeare was, as I believe, conversant with the better class of English literature which the reign of Elizabeth afforded. Among other books, the translation by North of Amyot's Plutarch seems to have fallen into his hands about 1607.

It was the source of three tragedies founded on the lives of Brutus, Antony and Coriolanus, the first bearing the name of Julius Cæsar. In this the plot wants even that historical unity which the romantic drama requires; the third and fourth acts are ill connected; it is deficient in female characters, and in that combination which is generally apparent amidst all the intricacies of his fable. But it abounds in fine scenes and fine passages; the spirit of Plutarch's Brutus is well seized, the predominance of Cæsar himself is judiciously restrained, the characters have that individuality which Shakspeare seldom misses; nor is there, perhaps, in the whole range of ancient and modern eloquence a speech more fully realizing the perfection that orators have striven to attain than that of Antony.

Antony and Cleopatra.

46. Antony and Cleopatra is of rather a different order; it does not furnish, perhaps, so many striking beauties as the last, but is at least equally redolent of the genius of Shakspeare. Antony indeed was given him by history, and he has but embodied in his own vivid colours the irregular mind of the Triumvir, ambitious and daring against all enemies but himself. In Cleopatra he had less to guide him; she is another incarnation of the same passions, more lawless and insensible to reason and honour, as they are found in women. This character being not one that can please, its strong and spirited delineation has not been sufficiently observed. It has indeed only a poetical originality; the type was in the courtezan of common life, but the resemblance is that of Michael Angelo's Sybils

CHAP. VI.

to a muscular woman. In this tragedy, like Julius Cæsar, as has been justly observed by Schlegel, the events that do not pass on the stage are scarcely made clear enough to one who is not previously acquainted with history, and some of the persons appear and vanish again without sufficient reason. He has in fact copied Plutarch too exactly.

Coriolanus.

47. This fault is by no means discerned in the third Roman tragedy of Shakspeare, Coriolanus. He luckily found an intrinsic historical unity which he could not have destroyed, and which his magnificent delineation of the chief personage has thoroughly maintained. Coriolanus himself has the grandeur of sculpture; his proportions are colossal, nor would less than this transcendent superiority by which he towers over his fellow-citizens, warrant, or seem for the moment to warrant, his haughtiness and their pusillanimity. The surprising judgment of Shakspeare is visible in this. A dramatist of the second class, a Corneille, a Schiller, or an Alfieri, would not have lost the occasion of representing the plebeian form of courage and patriotism. A tribune would have been made to utter noble speeches, and some critics would have extolled the balance and contrast of the antagonist principles. And this might have degenerated into the general saws of ethics and politics which philosophical tragedians love to pour forth. But Shakspeare instinctively perceived that to render the arrogance of Coriolanus endurable to the spectator, or dramatically probable, he must abase the plebeians to a contemptible populace.

The sacrifice of historic truth is often necessary for the truth of poetry. The citizens of early Rome, "*rusticorum mascula militum proles,*" are indeed calumniated in his scenes, and might almost pass for burgesses of Stratford; but the unity of emotion is not dissipated by contradictory energies. Coriolanus is less rich in poetical style than the other two, but the comic parts are full of humour. In these three tragedies it is manifest that Roman character, and still more Roman manners, are not exhibited with the precision of a scholar; yet there is something that distinguishes them from the rest, something of a *grandiosity* in the sentiments and language, which shows us that Shakspeare had not read that history without entering into its spirit.

His retirement and death.

48. Othello, or perhaps the Tempest, is reckoned by many the latest of Shakspeare's works. In the zenith of his faculties, in possession of fame disproportionate indeed to what has since accrued to his memory, but beyond that of any contemporary, at the age of about forty-seven, he ceased to write, and settled himself at a distance from all dramatic associations in his own native town; a home, of which he had never lost sight, nor even permanently quitted, the birth-place of his children, and to which he brought what might then seem affluence in a middle station, with the hope, doubtless, of a secure decline into the yellow leaf of years. But he was cut off in 1616, not probably in the midst of any schemes for his own glory, but to the loss of those enjoyments which he had accustomed himself to value beyond it. His descendants, it is well

CHAP. VI.

known, became extinct in little more than half a century.

Greatness of his genius.

49. The name of Shakspeare is the greatest in our literature—it is the greatest in all literature. No man ever came near to him in the creative powers of the mind; no man had ever such strength at once, and such variety of imagination. Coleridge has most felicitously applied to him a Greek epithet, given before to I know not whom, certainly none so deserving of it, *μυριονους*, the thousand-souled Shakspeare.* The number of characters in his plays is astonishingly great, without reckoning those, who although transient, have often their individuality, all distinct, all types of human life in well defined differences. Yet he never takes an abstract quality to embody it, scarcely perhaps a definite condition of manners, as Jonson does; nor did he draw much, as I conceive, from living models; there is no manifest appearance of personal caricature in his comedies, though in some slight traits of character this may not improbably have been the case. Above all neither he nor his contemporaries wrote for the stage in the worst, though most literal, and of late years the most usual sense; making the servants and hand-maids of dramatic invention to lord over it, and limiting the capacities of the poet's mind to those of the performers. If this poverty of the representative department of the drama had hung like an incumbent fiend on the creative power of Shakspeare,

* Table-talk, vol. ii. p. 301. Coleridge had previously spoken of Shakspeare's *oceanic* mind, which, if we take it in the sense of multitudinous unity, *ποντιων κυματων ανηριθμον γελασμα*, will present the same idea as *μυριονους* in a beautiful image.

how would he have poured forth with such inexhaustible prodigality the vast diversity of characters that we find in some of his plays? This it is in which he leaves far behind not the dramatists alone, but all writers of fiction. Compare with him Homer, the tragedians of Greece, the poets of Italy, Plautus, Cervantes, Molière, Addison, Le Sage, Fielding, Richardson, Scott, the romancers of the elder or later schools, — one man has far more than surpassed them all. Others may have been as sublime, others may have been more pathetic, others may have equalled him in grace and purity of language, and have shunned some of its faults; but the philosophy of Shakspeare, his intimate searching out of the human heart, whether in the gnomic form of sentence, or in the dramatic exhibition of character, is a gift peculiarly his own. It is, if not entirely wanting, very little manifested in comparison with him, by the English dramatists of his own and the subsequent period, whom we are about to approach.

His judgment.

50. These dramatists, as we shall speedily perceive, are hardly less inferior to Shakspeare in judgment. To this quality I particularly advert, because foreign writers, and sometimes our own, have imputed an extraordinary barbarism and rudeness to his works. They belong indeed to an age sufficiently rude and barbarous in its entertainments, and are of course to be classed with what is called the romantic school, which has hardly yet shaken off that reproach. But no one who has perused the plays anterior to those of Shakspeare, or contemporary with them, or subsequent to them

CHAP. VI.

down to the closing of the theatres in the civil war, will pretend to deny that there is far less regularity, in regard to every thing where regularity can be desired, in a large proportion of these, (perhaps in all the tragedies) than in his own. We need only repeat the names of the Merchant of Venice, Romeo and Juliet, Macbeth, Othello, the Merry Wives of Windsor, Measure for Measure. The plots in these are excellently constructed, and in some with uncommon artifice. But even where an analysis of the story might excite criticism, there is generally an unity of interest which tones the whole. The Winter's Tale is not a model to follow, but we feel that the Winter's Tale is a single story; it is even managed as such with consummate skill. It is another proof of Shakspeare's judgment, that he has given action enough to his comedies without the bustling intricacy of the Spanish stage. If his plots have any little obscurity in some parts, it is from copying his novel or history too minutely.

51. The idolatry of Shakspeare has been carried so far of late years, that Drake and perhaps greater authorities have been unwilling to acknowledge any faults in his plays. This however is an extravagance rather derogatory to the critic than honourable to the poet. Besides the blemishes of construction in some of his plots, which are pardonable but still blemishes, there are too many in his style. His conceits and quibbles often spoil the effect of his scenes and take off from the passion he would excite. In the last act of Richard II., the Duke of York is introduced demanding the punishment of his son Aumale for a conspiracy

against the king, while the Duchess implores mercy. The scene is ill conceived and worse executed throughout; but one line is both atrocious and contemptible. The Duchess having dwelt on the word *pardon*, and urged the king to let her hear it from his lips, York takes her up with this stupid quibble:

> Speak it in French, King; say, Pardonnez moi.

It would not be difficult to find several other instances, though none, perhaps, quite so bad, of verbal equivocations, mis-placed and inconsistent with the person's, the author's, the reader's sentiment.

His obscurity.

52. Few will defend these notorious faults. But is there not one, less frequently mentioned, yet of more continual recurrence; the extreme obscurity of Shakspeare's diction? His style is full of new words in new senses. It is easy to pass this over as obsoleteness; but though many expressions are obsolete, and many provincial, though the labour of his commentators has never been so profitably, as well as so diligently, employed as in tracing this by the help of the meanest and most forgotten books of the age, it is impossible to deny that innumerable lines in Shakspeare were not more intelligible in his time than they are at present. Much of this may be forgiven, or rather is so incorporated with the strength of his reason and fancy that we love it as the proper body of Shakspeare's soul. Still can we justify the very numerous passages which yield to no interpretation, knots which are never unloosed, which conjecture does but cut,

CHAP. VI.

or even those, which if they may at last be understood, keep the attention in perplexity till the first emotion has passed away? And these occur not merely in places where the struggles of the speaker's mind may be well denoted by some obscurities of language, as in the soliloquies of Hamlet and Macbeth, but in dialogues between ordinary personages, and in the business of the play. We learn Shakspeare, in fact, as we learn a language, or as we read a difficult passage in Greek, with the eye glancing on the commentary; and it is only after much study that we come to forget a part, it can be but a part, of the perplexities he has caused us. This was no doubt one reason that he was less read formerly, his style passing for obsolete, though in many parts, as we have just said, it was never much more intelligible than it is.*

His popularity.

53. It does not appear probable that Shakspeare was ever placed below, or merely on a level with the other dramatic writers of this period.† That

* "Shakspeare's style is so pestered with figurative expressions that it is as affected as it is obscure. It is true that in his latter plays he had worn off somewhat of this rust."—Dryden's Works (Malone), vol. ii. part ii. p. 252. This is by no means the truth, but rather the reverse of it; Dryden knew not at all which were earlier, or which later, of Shakspeare's plays.

† A certain William Cartwright, in commendatory verses addressed to Fletcher, has the assurance to say;

Shakspeare to thee was dull, whose best wit lies
I' th' ladies' questions, and the fools' replies.

But the suffrage of Jonson himself, of Milton, and of many more that might be quoted, tends to prove that his genius was esteemed beyond that of any other, though some might compare inferior writers to him in other qualifications of the dramatist. Even Dryden, who came in a worse period, and had no undue reverence for Shakspeare, admits that "he was the man who of all modern, and perhaps ancient poets, had the largest and most comprehensive soul. All the images of nature were still present to him, and he drew them not laboriously, but luckily: when he describes any thing, you more than see it, you feel it too. Those who accuse

his plays were not so frequently represented as those of Fletcher, is little to the purpose; they required a more expensive decoration, a larger company of good performers, and above all, they were less intelligible to a promiscuous audience. But it is certain that throughout the seventeenth century, and even in the writings of Addison and his contemporaries, we seldom or never meet with that complete recognition of his supremacy, that unhesitating preference of him to all the world, which has become the faith of the last and the present century. And it is remarkable that this apotheosis, so to speak, of Shakspeare was originally the work of what has been styled a frigid and tasteless generation, the age of George II. Much is certainly due to the stage itself, when those appeared, who could guide and control the public taste, and discover that in the poet himself which sluggish imaginations could not have reached. The enthusiasm for Shakspeare is nearly coincident with that for Garrick; it was kept up by his followers, and especially by that highly-gifted family which has but recently been withdrawn from our stage.

Critics on Shakspeare.

54. Among the commentators on Shakspeare, Warburton, always striving to display his own acuteness and scorn of others, deviates more than any one else from the meaning. Theobald was the

him to have wanted learning give him the greater commendation; he was naturally learned; he needed not the spectacles of books to read nature; he looked inwards, and found her there."—Dryden's Prose Works (Malone's edition), vol. i. part ii. p. 99.

CHAP. VI.

first who did a little. Johnson explained much well, but there is something magisterial in the manner wherein he dismisses each play like a boy's exercise, that irritates the reader. His criticism is frequently judicious, but betrays no ardent admiration for Shakspeare. Malone and Steevens were two laborious commentators on the meaning of words and phrases; one dull, the other clever; but the dullness was accompanied by candour and a love of truth, the cleverness by a total absence of both. Neither seems to have had a full discernment of Shakspeare's genius. The numerous critics of the last age who were not editors have poured out much that is trite and insipid, much that is hypercritical and erroneous; yet collectively they not only bear witness to the public taste for the poet, but taught men to judge and feel more accurately than they would have done for themselves. Hurd and Lord Kaimes, especially the former, may be reckoned among the best of this class *; Mrs. Montagu, perhaps, in her celebrated Essay, not very far from the bottom of the list. In the present century, Coleridge and Schlegel, so nearly at the same time that the question of priority and even plagiarism has been mooted, gave a more philosophical, and at the same time a more intrinsically

* Hurd, in his notes on Horace's Art of Poetry, vol. i. p. 52., has some very good remarks on the diction of Shakspeare, suggested by the "callida junctura" of the Roman poet, illustrated by many instances. These remarks both serve to bring out the skill of Shakspeare, and to explain the disputed passage in Horace. Hurd justly maintains the obvious construction of that passage; "notum si callida verbum Reddiderit junctura novum." That proposed by Lambinus and Beattie, which begins with *novum*, is inadmissible, and gives a worse sense.

exact view of Shakspeare, than their predecessors. What has since been written, has often been highly acute and æsthetic, but occasionally with an excess of refinement which substitutes the critic for the work. Mrs. Jameson's Essays on the Female Characters of Shakspeare are among the best. It was right that this province of illustration should be reserved for a woman's hand.

CHAP. VI.

Ben Jonson.

55. Ben Jonson, so generally known by that familiar description that some might hardly recognize him without it, was placed next to Shakspeare by his own age. They were much acquainted, and belonged to the oldest, perhaps, and not the worst of clubs, formed by Sir Walter Raleigh about the beginning of the century, which met at the Mermaid in Friday-street. We may easily believe the testimony of one of its members, that it was a feast of the most subtle and brilliant wit.* Jonson had abundant powers of poignant and sarcastic humour, besides extensive reading, and Shakspeare must have brought to the Mermaid the brightness of his fancy. Selden and Camden, the former in early youth, are reported to have given the ballast of their strong sense and learning to this cluster of poets. There has been, however, a prevalent tradition that Jonson was not without some malignant and envious feelings towards Shakspeare. Gifford has repelled this imputation with considerable success, though we may still suspect that there was something caustic and saturnine in the temper of Jonson.

* Gifford's Life of Jonson, p. 65. Collier, iii. 275.

CHAP. VI.

The Alchemist.

56. The Alchemist is a play which long remained on the stage, though I am not sure that it has been represented since the days of Garrick, who was famous in Abel Drugger. Notwithstanding the indiscriminate and injudicious panegyric of Gifford, I believe there is no reader of taste but will condemn the outrageous excess of pedantry with which the first acts of this play abound; pedantry the more intolerable, that it is not even what, however unfit for the English stage, scholars might comprehend, but the gibberish of obscure treatises on alchemy, which, whatever the commentators may chuse to say, was as unintelligible to all but a few half-witted dupes of that imposture as it is at present. Much of this, it seems impossible to doubt, was omitted in representation. Nor is his pedantic display of learning confined to the part of the Alchemist, who had certainly a right to talk in the style of his science, if he had done it with some moderation: Sir Epicure Mammon, a worldly sensualist, placed in the author's own age, pours out a torrent of gluttonous cookery from the kitchens of Heliogabalus and Apicius; his dishes are to be camels' heels, the beards of barbels and dissolved pearl, crowning all with the paps of a sow. But while this habitual error of Jonson's vanity is not to be overlooked, we may truly say, that it is much more than compensated by the excellencies of this comedy. The plot, with great simplicity, is continually animated and interesting; the characters are conceived and delineated with admirable boldness, truth, spirit and variety; the humour, especially in the two

Puritans, a sect who now began to do penance on the stage, is amusing; the language, when it does not smell too much of book-learning, is forcible and clear. The Alchemist is one of the three plays which usually contest the superiority among those of Jonson.

Volpone, or The Fox.

57. The second of these is The Fox, which, according to general opinion, has been placed above the Alchemist. Notwithstanding the dissent of Gifford, I should concur in this suffrage. The fable belongs to a higher class of comedy. Without minutely inquiring whether the Roman hunters after the inheritance of the rich, so well described by Horace, and especially the costly presents by which they endeavoured to secure a better return, are altogether according to the manners of Venice, where Jonson has laid his scene, we must acknowledge that he has displayed the base cupidity, of which there will never be wanting examples among mankind, in such colours as all other dramatic poetry can hardly rival. Cumberland has blamed the manner, in which Volpone brings ruin on his head by insulting, in disguise, those whom he had duped. In this, I agree with Gifford, there is no violation of nature. Besides their ignorance of his person, so that he could not necessarily foresee the effects of Voltore's rage, it has been well and finely said by Cumberland himself, that there is a moral in a villain's out-witting himself. And this is one that many dramatists have displayed.

58. In the choice of subject, The Fox is much inferior to Tartuffe, to which it bears some very general analogy. Though the Tartuffe is not a

CHAP. VI.

remarkably agreeable play, The Fox is much less so; five of the principal characters are wicked almost beyond any retribution that comedy can dispense; the smiles it calls forth are not those of gaiety but scorn; and the parts of an absurd English knight and his wife, though very humorous, are hardly prominent enough to enliven the scenes of guilt and fraud which pass before our eyes. But, though too much pedantry obtrudes itself, it does not overspread the pages with nonsense as in the Alchemist; the characters of Celia and Bonario excite some interest; the differences, one can hardly say the gradations, of villainy are marked with the strong touches of Jonson's pen; the incidents succeed rapidly and naturally; the dramatic effect, above all, is perceptible to every reader, and rises in a climax through the last two acts to the conclusion.

The Silent Woman.

59. The Silent Woman, which has been named by some with the Alchemist and the Fox, falls much below them in vigorous delineation and dramatic effect. It has more diversity of manners than of character, the amusing scenes border sometimes on farce, as where two cowardly knights are made to receive blows in the dark, each supposing them to come from his adversary, and the catastrophe is neither pleasing nor probable. It is written with a great deal of spirit, and has a value as the representation of London life in the higher ranks at that time. But upon the whole I should be inclined to give to Every Man in his Humour a much superior place. It is a proof of Jonson's extensive learning that the story of this play, and several particular passages have been detected in a

writer so much out of the beaten track as Libanius.*

Sad Shepherd.

60. The pastoral drama of the Sad Shepherd is the best testimony to the poetical imagination of Jonson. Superior in originality, liveliness and beauty to the Faithful Shepherdess of Fletcher, it reminds us rather, in language and imagery, of the Midsummer Night's Dream, and perhaps no other poetry has come so near to that of Shakspeare. Jonson, like him, had an extraordinary command of English, in its popular and provincial idioms, as well as what might be gained from books; and though his invincible pedantry now and then obtrudes itself into the mouths of shepherds, it is compensated by numerous passages of the most natural and graceful expression. This beautiful drama is imperfect, hardly more than half remaining, or more probably having ever been written. It was also Jonson's last song; age and poverty had stolen upon him; but as one has said, who experienced the same destiny, "the life was in the leaf," and his laurel remained verdant amidst the snow of his honoured head. The beauties of the Sad Shepherd might be reckoned rather poetical than dramatic; yet the action is both diversified and interesting to a degree we seldom find in the pastoral drama; there is little that is low in the

* Gifford discovered this. Dryden, who has given an examination of the Silent Woman, in his Essay on Dramatic Poetry, takes Morose for a real character, and says that he had so been informed. It is possible that there might be some foundation of truth in this; the skeleton is in Libanius, but Jonson may have filled it up from the life. Dryden gives it as his opinion that there is more wit and acuteness of fancy in this play than in any of Ben Jonson's, and that he has described the conversation of gentlemen with more gaiety and freedom than in the rest of his comedies. p. 107.

CHAP. VI.

comic speeches, nothing that is inflated in the serious.

Beaumont and Fletcher.

61. Two men once united by friendship, and for ever by fame, the Dioscuri of our zodiac, Beaumont and Fletcher, rose upon the horizon as the star of Shakspeare, though still in its fullest brightness, was declining in the sky. The first in order of time among more than fifty plays published with their joint names, is the Woman-Hater, represented, according to Langbaine, in 1607, and ascribed to Beaumont alone by Seward, though, I believe, merely on conjecture.* Beaumont died, at the age of thirty, in 1615; Fletcher in 1625. No difference of manner is perceptible, or at least no critic has perceived any, in the plays that appeared between these two epochs; in fact the greater part were not printed till 1647, and it is only through the records of the play-house that we distinguish their dates. The tradition, however, of their own times, as well as the earlier death of Beaumont, give us reason to name Fletcher, when we mention one singly, as the principal author of all these plays; and of late years this has perhaps become more customary than it used to be. A contemporary copy of verses, indeed, seems to attribute the greater share in the Maid's Tragedy, Philaster, and King and No King to Beaumont. But testimony of this kind is very precarious. It is sufficient that he bore a part in these three.

Corrupt state of their text.

62. Of all our early dramatic poets, none have suffered such mangling by the printer as Beaumont

* Vol. i. p. 3. He also thinks The Nice Valour exclusively Beaumont's. These two appear to me about the worst in the collection.

and Fletcher. Their style is generally elliptical and not very perspicuous; they use words in peculiar senses, and there seems often an attempt at pointed expression, in which its meaning has deserted them. But after every effort to comprehend their language, it is continually so remote from all possibility of bearing a rational sense, that we can only have recourse to one hypothesis, that of an extensive and irreparable corruption of the text. Seward and Simpson, who, in 1750, published the first edition in which any endeavour was made at illustration or amendment, though not men of much taste, and too fond of extolling their authors, showed some acuteness, and have restored many passages in a probable manner, though often driven out at sea to conjecture something, where the received reading furnished not a vestige which they could trace. No one since has made any great progress in this criticism, though some have carped at these editors for not performing more. The problem of actual restoration in most places, where the printers or transcribers have made such strange havock, must evidently be insoluble.

The Maid's Tragedy.

63. The first play in the collected works of Beaumont and Fletcher, though not the earliest, is the Maid's Tragedy, and it is among the best. None of their female characters, though they are often very successful in beautiful delineations of virtuous love, attaches our sympathy like Aspasia. Her sorrows are so deep, so pure, so unmerited, she sustains the breach of plighted faith in Amyntor, and the taunts of vicious women with so much resignation, so little of that termagant resentment

these poets are apt to infuse into their heroines, the poetry of her speeches is so exquisitely imaginative, that, of those dramatic persons who are not prominent in the development of a story, scarce any, even in Shakspeare, are more interesting. Nor is the praise due to the Maid's Tragedy confined to the part of Aspasia. In Melantius we have Fletcher's favourite character, the brave honest soldier, incapable of suspecting evil, till it becomes impossible to be ignorant of it, but unshrinking in its punishment. That of Evadne well displays the audacious security of guilt under the safe-guard of power; it is highly theatrical, and renders the success of this tragedy not surprising in times when its language and situations could be endured by the audience. We may remark in this tragedy, as in many others of these dramatists, that, while pouring out the unlimited loyalty fashionable at the court of James, they are full of implied satire, which could hardly escape observation. The warm eulogies on military glory, the scorn of slothful peace, the pictures of dissolute baseness in courtiers, seem to spring from a dislike, very usual among the English gentry, a rank to which they both belonged, for that ignominious government; and though James was far enough removed from such voluptuous tyrants as Fletcher has pourtrayed in this and some other plays, they did not serve to exemplify the advantages of monarchy in the most attractive manner.

64. The Maid's Tragedy, unfortunately, beautiful and essentially moral as it is, cannot be called a tragedy for maids; and indeed should hardly be

read by any respectable woman. It abounds with that studiously protracted indecency which distinguished Fletcher beyond all our early dramatists, and is so much incorporated with his plays, that very few of them can be so altered as to become tolerable at present on the stage. In this he is strikingly contrasted with Shakspeare, whose levities of this kind are so transitory, and so much confined to language, that he has borne the process of purification with little detriment to his genius, or even to his wit.

Philaster.

65. Philaster has been, in its day, one of the best known and most popular of Fletcher's plays.* This was owing to the pleasing characters of Philaster and Bellario, and to the frequent sweetness of the poetry. It is nevertheless not a first-rate play. The plot is most absurdly managed. It turns on the suspicion of Arethusa's infidelity. And the sole ground of this is that an abandoned woman, being detected herself, accuses the princess of unchastity. Not a shadow of presumptive evidence is brought to confirm this impudent assertion, which however, the lady's father, her lover, and a grave sensible courtier do not fail implicitly to believe. How unlike the chain of circumstance, and the devilish cunning by which the Moor is wrought up to think his Desdemona false! Bellario is suggested by Viola; there is more picturesqueness, more dramatic importance,

* Dryden says, but I know not how truly, that Philaster was "the first play that brought Beaumont and Fletcher in esteem; for before that they had written two or three very unsuccessfully." p. 100. Philaster was not printed, according to Langbaine, till 1620; I do not know that we have any evidence of the date of its representation.

CHAP. VI.

not perhaps, more beauty and sweetness of affection, but a more eloquent development of it in Fletcher; on the other hand, there is still more of that improbability which attends a successful concealment of sex by mere disguise of clothes, though no artifice has been more common on the stage. Many other circumstances in the conduct of Fletcher's story are ill-contrived. It has less wit than the greater part of his comedies; for among such, according to the old distinction, it is to be ranked, though the subject is elevated and serious.

King and No King.

66. King and No King is, in my judgment, inferior to Philaster. The language has not so much of poetical beauty. The character of Arbaces excites no sympathy; it is a compound of vainglory and violence, which rather demands disgrace from poetical justice than reward. Panthea is innocent, but insipid; Mardonius a good specimen of what Fletcher loves to exhibit, the plain honest courtier. As for Bessus, he certainly gives occasion to several amusing scenes; but his cowardice is a little too glaring; he is neither so laughable as Bobadil, nor so sprightly as Parolles. The principal merit of this play, which rendered it popular on the stage for many years, consists in the effective scenes where Arbaces reveals his illicit desire. That especially with Mardonius is artfully and elaborately written. Shakspeare had less of this skill; and his tragedies suffer for it in their dramatic effect. The scene between John and Hubert is an exception, and there is a great deal of it in Othello; but in general he may be said not to have exerted the power of detaining the spectator

in that anxious suspense, which creates almost an actual illusion, and makes him tremble at every word, lest the secret which he has learned should be imparted to the imaginary person on the stage. Of this there are several fine instances in the Greek tragedians, the famous scene in the Œdipus Tyrannus being the best; and it is possible that the superior education of Fletcher may have rendered him familiar with the resources of ancient tragedy. These scenes in the present play would have been more highly powerful if the interest could have been thrown on any character superior to the selfish braggart Arbaces. It may be said perhaps that his humiliation through his own lawless passions, after so much insolence of success, affords a moral; he seems, however, but imperfectly cured at the conclusion, which is also hurried on with unsatisfactory rapidity.

The Elder Brother.

67. The Elder Brother has been generally reckoned among the best of Fletcher's comedies. It displays in a new form an idea not very new in fiction, the power of love, on the first sight of a woman, to vivify a soul utterly ignorant of the passion. Charles, the Elder Brother, much unlike the Cymon of Dryden, is absorbed in study; a mere scholar without a thought beyond his books. His indifference, perhaps, and ignorance about the world are rather exaggerated and border on stupidity; but it was the custom of the dramatists in that age to produce effect in representation by very sudden developments, if not changes, of character. The other persons are not ill conceived; the honest testy Miramont, who admires learning without much

CHAP. VI.

more of it than enables him to sign his name, the two selfish worldly fathers of Charles and Angelina, believing themselves shrewd, yet the easy dupes of coxcomb manners from the court, the spirited Angelina, the spoiled but not worthless Eustace, show Fletcher's great talent in dramatic invention. In none of his mere comedies has he sustained so uniformly elegant and pleasing a style of poetry; the language of Charles is naturally that of a refined scholar, but now and then perhaps we find old Miramont talk above himself. The underplot hits to the life the licentious endeavours of an old man to seduce his inferior; but, as usual, it reveals vice too broadly. This comedy is of very simple construction, so that Cibber was obliged to blend it with another, The Custom of the Country, in order to compose from the two his Love Makes a Man, by no means the worst play of that age. The two plots however do not harmonize very well.

The Spanish Curate.

68. The Spanish Curate is in all probability taken from one of those comedies of intrigue, *capa y espada*, which the fame of Lope de Vega had made popular in Europe. It is one of the best specimens of that manner; the plot is full of incident and interest, without being difficult of comprehension, nor, with fair allowance for the conventions of the stage and manners of the country, improbable. The characters are in full relief without caricature. Fletcher, with an artifice of which he is very fond, has made the fierce resentment of Violante break out unexpectedly from the calmness she had shown in the first scenes; but it is so well accounted for, that we see nothing unnatural

in the development of passions for which there had been no previous call. Ascanio is again one of Fletcher's favourite delineations; a kind of Bellario in his modest affectionate disposition; one, in whose prosperity the reader takes so much pleasure that he forgets it is, in a worldly sense, inconsistent with that of the honest-hearted Don Jamie. The doting husband, Don Henrique, contrasts well with the jealous Bartolus; and both afford by their fate the sort of moral which is looked for in comedy. The underplot of the lawyer and his wife, while it shows how licentious in principle as well as indecent in language the stage had become, is conducted with incomparable humour and amusement. Congreve borrowed part of this in the Old Bachelor without by any means equalling it. Upon the whole, as a comedy of this class, it deserves to be placed in the highest rank.

The Custom of the Country.

69. The Custom of the Country is much deformed by obscenity, especially the first act. But it is full of nobleness in character and sentiment, of interesting situations, of unceasing variety of action. Fletcher has never shown what he so much delights in drawing, the contrast of virtuous dignity with ungoverned passion in woman, with more success than in Zenocia and Hippolyta. Of these three plays we may say, perhaps, that there is more poetry in the Elder Brother, more interest in the Custom of the Country, more wit and spirit in the Spanish Curate.

The Loyal Subject.

70. The Loyal Subject ought also to be placed in a high rank among the works of Beaumont and Fletcher. There is a play by Heywood, The Royal

CHAP. VI.

King and Loyal Subject, from which the general idea of several circumstances of this have been taken. That Heywood's was the original, though the only edition of it is in 1637, while the Loyal Subject was represented in 1615, cannot bear a doubt. The former is expressly mentioned in the epilogue as an old play, belonging to a style gone out of date, and not to be judged with rigour. Heywood has therefore the praise of having conceived the character of Earl Marshal, upon which Fletcher somewhat improved in Archas; a brave soldier of that disinterested and devoted loyalty, which bears all ingratitude and outrage at the hands of an unworthy and misguided sovereign. In the days of James there could be no more courtly moral. In each play the prince, after depriving his most deserving subject of honours and fortune, tries his fidelity by commanding him to send two daughters, whom he had educated in seclusion, to the court, with designs that the father may easily suspect. The loyalty however of these honest soldiers, like the hospitality of Lot, submits to encounter this danger; and the conduct of the young ladies soon proves that they might be trusted in the fiery trial. In the Loyal Subject, Fletcher has beautifully, and with his light touch of pencil, sketched the two virtuous sisters; one high-spirited, intrepid, undisguised, the other shrinking with maiden modesty, a tremulous dew-drop in the cup of a violet. But unfortunately his original taint betrays itself, and the elder sister cannot display her scorn of licentiousness without borrowing some of its language. If Shakspeare had put these loose images into the

mouth of Isabella, how differently we should have esteemed her character! CHAP. VI.

71. We find in the Loyal Subject what is neither pleasing nor probable, the disguise of a youth as a girl. This was of course not offensive to those who saw nothing else on the stage. Fletcher did not take this from Heywood. In the whole management of the story he is much superior; the nobleness of Archas and his injuries are still more displayed than those of the Earl Marshal; and he has several new characters, especially Theodore, the impetuous son of the Loyal Subject, who does not brook the insults of a prince as submissively as his father, which fill the play with variety and spirit. The language is in some places obscure and probably corrupt, but abounding with that kind of poetry which belongs to Fletcher.

72. Beggar's Bush is an excellent comedy; the serious parts interesting, the comic diverting. Every character supports itself well; if some parts of the plot have been suggested by As you Like It, they are managed so as to be original in spirit. Few of Fletcher's plays furnish more proofs of his characteristic qualities. It might be represented with no great curtailment. Beggar's Bush.

73. The Scornful Lady is one of those comedies which exhibit English domestic life, and have therefore a value independent of their dramatic merit. It does not equal Beggar's Bush, but is full of effective scenes, which, when less regard was paid to decency, must have rendered it a popular play. Fletcher in fact is as much superior to Shakspeare in his knowledge of the stage, as he The Scornful Lady.

CHAP. VI.

falls below him in that of human nature. His fertile invention was turned to the management of his plot (always with a view to representation), the rapid succession of incidents, the surprises and embarrassments which keep the spectator's attention alive. His characters are but vehicles to the story; they are distinguished, for the most part, by little more than the slight peculiarities of manner, which are easily caught by the audience; and we do not often meet, especially in his comedies, with the elaborate delineations of Jonson, or the marked idiosyncracies of Shakspeare. Of these his great predecessors, one formed a deliberate conception of a character, whether taken from general nature or from manners, and drew his figure, as it were, in his mind before he transferred it to the canvas; with the other the idea sprang out of the depths of his soul, and though suggested by the story he had chosen, became so much the favourite of his genius as he wrote, that in its development he sometimes grew negligent of his plot.

Valentinian.

74. No tragedy of Fletcher would deserve higher praise than Valentinian, if he had not, by an inconceivable want of taste and judgment, descended from beauty and dignity to the most preposterous absurdities. The matron purity of the injured Lucina, the ravages of unrestrained self-indulgence on a mind not wholly without glimpses of virtue in Valentinian, the vileness of his courtiers, the spirited contrast of unconquerable loyalty in Ætius with the natural indignation at wrong in Maximus, are brought before our

eyes in some of Fletcher's best poetry, though in a text that seems even more corrupt than usual. But after the admirable scene in the third act, where Lucina (the Lucretia of this story) reveals her injury, perhaps almost the only scene in this dramatist, if we except the Maid's Tragedy, that can move us to tears, her husband Maximus, who even here begins to forfeit our sympathy by his ready consent, in the Spanish style of perverted honour, to her suicide, becomes a treacherous and ambitious villain; the loyalty of Ætius turns to downright folly, and the rest of the play is but such a series of murders as Marston or the author of Andronicus might have devised. If Fletcher meant, which he very probably did, to inculcate as a moral, that the worst of tyrants are to be obeyed with unflinching submission, he may have gained applause at court, at the expense of his reputation with posterity.

The Two Noble Kinsmen.

75. The Two Noble Kinsmen is a play that has been honoured by a tradition of Shakspeare's concern in it. The evidence as to this is the title-page of the first edition; which, though it may seem much at first sight, is next to nothing in our old drama, full of mis-nomers of this kind. The editors of Beaumont and Fletcher have insisted upon what they take for marks of Shakspeare's style; and Schlegel, after "seeing no reason for doubting so probable an opinion," detects the spirit of Shakspeare in a certain ideal purity which distinguishes this from other plays of Fletcher, and in the conscientious fidelity with which it follows the Knight's Tale in Chaucer.

CHAP. VI.

The Two Noble Kinsmen has much of that elevated sense of honour, friendship, fidelity and love which belongs, I think, more characteristically to Fletcher, who had drunk at the fountain of Castilian romance, than to one, in whose vast mind this conventional morality of particular classes was subordinated to the universal nature of man. In this sense Fletcher is always, in his tragic compositions, a very ideal poet. The subject itself is fitter for him than for Shakspeare. In the language and conduct of this play, with great deference to better and more attentive critics, I see imitations of Shakspeare rather than such resemblances as denote his powerful stamp. The madness of the jailor's daughter, where some have imagined they saw the master-hand, is doubtless suggested by that of Ophelia, but with an inferiority of taste and feeling, which it seems impossible not to recognize. The painful and degrading symptom of female insanity, which Shakspeare has touched with his gentle hand, is dwelt upon by Fletcher with all his innate impurity. Can any one believe that the former would have written the last scene in which the jailor's daughter appears on the stage? Schlegel has too fine taste to believe that this character came from Shakspeare, and it is given up by the latest assertor of his claim to a participation in the play.*

* A "Letter on Shakspeare's Authorship of the Drama, entitled the Two Noble Kinsmen," Edinburgh, 1833, notwithstanding this title, does not deny a considerable participation to Fletcher. He lays no great stress on the external evidence. But in arguing from the similarity of style in many passages to that of Shakspeare, the author,

CHAP. VI.

The Faithful Shepherdess.

76. The Faithful Shepherdess, deservedly among the most celebrated productions of Fletcher, stands alone in its class, and admits of no comparison with any other play. It is a pastoral drama, in imitation of the Pastor Fido, at that time very popular in England. The Faithful Shepherdess, however, to the great indignation of the poets, did not succeed on its first representation. There is nothing in this surprising; the tone of pastoral is too far removed from the possibilities of life for a stage which appealed, like ours, to the boisterous sympathies of a general audience. It is a play very characteristic of Fletcher, being a mixture of tenderness, purity, indecency, and absurdity. There is some justice in Schlegel's remark, that it is an immodest eulogy on modesty. But this critic, who does not seem to appreciate the beauty of Fletcher's poetry, should hardly have mentioned Guarini as a model whom he might have followed. It was by copying the Corisca of the Pastor Fido that Fletcher introduced the character of the vicious shepherdess Cloe; though, according to his times, and, we must own, to his disposition, he has greatly aggravated the faults to

with whose name I am unacquainted, shows so much taste and so competent a knowledge of the two dramatists, that I should perhaps scruple to set up my own doubts in opposition. His chief proofs are drawn from the force and condensation of language in particular passages, which doubtless is one of the great distinctions between the two. But we might wish to have seen this displayed in longer extracts than such as the author of this Letter has generally given us. It is difficult to say of a man like Fletcher that he could not have written single lines in the spirit of his predecessor. A few instances, however, of longer passages will be found; and I believe that it is a subject upon which there will long be a difference of opinion.

CHAP. VI.

which just exception has been taken in his original.

77. It is impossible to withhold our praise from the poetical beauties of this pastoral drama. Every one knows that it contains the germ of Comus; the benevolent Satyr, whose last proposition to "stray in the middle air, and stay the sailing rack, or nimbly take hold of the moon" is not much in the character of these sylvans, has been judiciously metamorphosed by Milton to an attendant spirit; and a more austere, as well as more uniform language has been given to the speakers. But Milton has borrowed largely from the imagination of his predecessor; and by quoting the lyric parts of the Faithful Shepherdess, it would be easy to deceive any one not accurately familiar with the songs of Comus. They abound with that rapid succession of ideal scenery, that darting of the poet's fancy from earth to heaven, those picturesque and novel metaphors, which distinguish much of the poetry of this age, and which are ultimately, perhaps, in great measure referrible to Shakspeare.

Rule a Wife and Have a Wife.

78. Rule a Wife and Have a Wife is among the superior comedies of its class. That it has a prototype on the Spanish theatre must appear likely; but I should be surprized if the variety and spirit of character, the vivacity of humour, be not chiefly due to our own authors. Every personage in this comedy is drawn with a vigorous pencil; so that it requires a good company to be well represented. It is indeed a mere picture of roguery; for even Leon, the only character for whom we can feel any sort of interest, has gained

his ends by stratagem; but his gallant spirit redeems this in our indulgent views of dramatic morality, and we are justly pleased with the discomfiture of fraud and effrontery in Estifania and Margarita. CHAP. VI.

Some other plays.

79. The Knight of the Burning Pestle is very diverting, and more successful perhaps than any previous attempt to introduce a drama within a drama. I should hardly except the Induction to the Taming of a Shrew. The burlesque, though very ludicrous, does not transgress all bounds of probability. The Wild-goose Chase, The Chances, The Humorous Lieutenant, Women Pleased, Wit without Money, Monsieur Thomas, and several other comedies, deserve to be praised for the usual excellencies of Fletcher, his gaiety, his invention, his ever varying rapidity of dialogue and incident. None are without his defects; and we may add, what is not in fairness to be called a defect of his, since it applies perhaps to every dramatic writer except Shakspeare and Molière, that being cast as it were in a common mould, we find both a monotony in reading several of these plays, and a difficulty of distinguishing them in remembrance.

80. The later writers, those especially after the Restoration, did not fail to appropriate many of the inventions of Fletcher. He and his colleague are the proper founders of our comedy of intrigue, which prevailed through the seventeenth century, the comedy of Wycherley, Dryden, Behn, and Shadwell. Their manner, if not their actual plots, may still be observed in many pieces that are produced on our stage. But few of those imi-

CHAP. VI.

tators came up to the sprightliness of their model. It is to be regretted that it is rarely practicable to adapt any one of his comedies to representation without such changes as destroy their original raciness, and dilute the geniality of their wit.

Origin of Fletcher's plays.

81. There has not been much curiosity to investigate the sources of his humorous plays. A few are historical; but it seems highly probable that the Spanish stage of Lope de Vega and his contemporaries often furnished the subject, and perhaps many of the scenes, to his comedies. These possess all the characteristics ascribed to the comedies of intrigue so popular in that country. The scene too is more commonly laid in Spain, and the costume of Spanish manners and sentiments more closely observed, than we should expect from the invention of Englishmen. It would be worth the leisure of some lover of theatrical literature to search the collection of Lope de Vega's works, and, if possible, the other Spanish writers at the beginning of the century, in order to trace the footsteps of our two dramatists. Sometimes they may have had recourse to novels. The Little French Lawyer seems to indicate such an origin. Nothing had as yet been produced, I believe, on the French stage from which it could have been derived, but the story and most of the characters are manifestly of French derivation. The comic humour of La Writ in this play we may ascribe to the invention of Fletcher himself.*

* Dryden reckons this play with the Spanish Curate, the Chances, and Rule a Wife and Have a Wife, among those which he supposes to be drawn from Spanish novels. Essay on Dramatic Poetry, p. 204.

Defects of their plots.

82. It is, however, not improbable that the entire plot was sometimes original. Fertile as their invention was, to an extraordinary degree, in furnishing the incidents of their rapid and animated comedies, we may believe the fable itself to have sometimes sprung from no other source. It seems indeed now and then, as if the authors had gone forward with no very clear determination of their catastrophe; there is a want of unity in the conception, a want of consistency in the characters, which appear sometimes rather intended to surprize by incongruity, than framed upon a definite model. That of Ruy Diaz in the Island Princess, of whom it is hard to say whether he is a brave man or a coward, or alternately one and the other, is an instance to which many more might easily be added. In the Bloody Brother, Rollo sends to execution one of his counsellors, whose daughter Edith vainly interferes in a scene of great pathos and effect. In the progress of the drama she arms herself to take away the tyrant's life; the whole of her character has been consistent and energetic; when Fletcher, to the reader's astonishment, thinks fit to imitate the scene between Richard and Lady Anne; and the ignominious fickleness of that lady, whom Shakspeare with wonderful skill, but in a manner not quite pleasing, sacrifices to the better display of the cunning

By novels we should probably understand plays; for those which he mentions are little in the style of novels. But the Little French Lawyer has all the appearance of coming from a French novel; the scene lies in France, and I see nothing Spanish about it. Dryden was seldom well-informed about the early stage.

CHAP. VI.

crook-back, is here transferred to the heroine of the play, and the very character upon whom its interest ought to depend. Edith is on the point of giving up her purpose, when some others in the conspiracy coming in, she recovers herself enough to exhort them to strike the blow.*

Their sentiments and style dramatic.

83. The sentiments and style of Fletcher, where not concealed by obscurity, or corruption of the text, are very dramatic. We cannot deny that the depths of Shakspeare's mind were often unfathomable by an audience; the bow was drawn by a matchless hand, but the shaft went out of sight. All might listen to Fletcher's pleasing, though not profound or vigorous language; his thoughts are noble, and tinged with the ideality of romance, his metaphors vivid, though sometimes too forced; he possesses the idiom of English without much pedantry, though in many passages he strains it beyond common use; his versification, though studiously irregular, is often rhythmical and sweet. Yet we are seldom arrested by striking beauties; good lines occur in every page, fine ones but rarely; we lay down the volume with a sense of admiration of what we have read, but little of it remains distinctly in the memory. Fletcher is not much quoted, and has not even afforded copious materials to those who cull the beauties of ancient lore.

* Rotrou, in his Wenceslas, as we have already observed, has done something of the same kind; it may have been meant as an ungenerous and calumnious attack on the constancy of the female sex. If lions were painters, the old fable says, they would exhibit a very different view of their contentions with men. But lionesses are become very good painters; and it is but through their clemency that we are not delineated in such a style as would retaliate the injuries of these tragedians.

Their characters.

84. In variety of character there can be no comparison between Fletcher and Shakspeare. A few types return upon us in the former; an old general, proud of his wars, faithful and passionate, a voluptuous and arbitrary king (for his principles of obedience do not seem to have inspired him with much confidence in royal virtues), a supple courtier, a high-spirited youth, or one more gentle in manners but not less stout in action, a lady, fierce and not always very modest in her chastity, repelling the solicitations of licentiousness, another impudently vicious, form the usual pictures for his canvas. Add to these, for the lighter comedy, an amorous old man, a gay spendthrift, and a few more of the staple characters of the stage, and we have the materials of Fletcher's dramatic world. It must be remembered that we compare him only with Shakspeare, and that as few dramatists have been more copious than Fletcher, few have been so much called upon for inventions, in which the custom of the theatre has not exacted much originality. The great fertility of his mind in new combinations of circumstance gives as much appearance of novelty to the personages themselves as an unreflecting audience requires. In works of fiction, even those which are read in the closet, this variation of the mere dress of a character is generally found sufficient for the public.

Their tragedies;

85. The tragedies of Beaumont and Fletcher, by which our ancestors seem to have meant only plays wherein any of the personages, or at least any whom the spectator would wish to keep alive, dies on the stage, are not very numerous, but in

CHAP. VI.

them we have as copious an effusion of blood as any contemporary dramas supply. The conclusion indeed of these, and of the tragi-comedies, which form a larger class, is generally mismanaged. A propensity to take the audience by surprise leads often to an unnatural and unsatisfactory catastrophe; it seems their aim to disappoint common expectation, to baffle reasonable conjecture, to mock natural sympathy. This is frequently the practice of our modern novelists, who find no better resource in the poverty of their invention to gratify the jaded palate of the world.

Inferior to their comedies.

86. The comic talents of these authors far exceeded their skill in tragedy. In comedy they founded a new school, at least in England, the vestiges of which are still to be traced in our theatre. Their plays are at once distinguishable from those of their contemporaries by the regard to dramatic effect which influenced the writers' imagination. Though not personally connected with the stage, they had its picture ever before their eyes. Hence their incidents are numerous and striking, their characters sometimes slightly sketched, not drawn like those of Jonson, from a preconceived design, but preserving that degree of individual distinctness which a common audience requires, and often highly humorous without extravagance; their language brilliant with wit, their measure, though they do not make great use of prose, very lax and rapid, running frequently to lines of thirteen and fourteen syllables. Few of their comedies are without a mixture of grave sentiments or elevated characters; and though there is much to condemn

CHAP. VI.

in their indecency and even licentiousness of principle, they never descend to the coarse buffoonery not unfrequent in their age. Never were dramatic poets more thoroughly gentlemen, according to the standard of their times; and, when we consider the court of James I., we may say that they were above that standard.*

Their female characters.

87. The best of Fletcher's characters are female; he wanted that large sweep of reflection and experience which is required for the greater diversity of the other sex. None of his women delight us like Imogen and Desdemona; but he has many Imogens and Desdemonas of a fainter type. Spacelia, Zenocia, Celia, Aspasia, Evanthe, Lucina, Ordella, Oriana, present the picture that cannot be greatly varied without departing from its essence, but which never can be repeated too often to please us, of faithful, tender, self-denying female love, superior to every thing but virtue. Nor is he less successful, generally, in the contrast of minds stained by guilty passion, though in this he sometimes exaggerates the outline till it borders on caricature.

* "Their plots were generally more regular than Shakspeare's, especially those which were made before Beaumont's death; and they understood and imitated the conversation of gentlemen much better; whose wild debaucheries and quickness of wit in repartees, no poet before them could paint as they have done. Humour which Ben Jonson derived from particular persons, they made it not their business to describe; they represented all the passions very lively, but above all, love. I am apt to believe the English language in them arrived to its highest perfection; what words have since been taken in, are rather superfluous than ornamental. Their plays are now the most pleasant and frequent entertainments of the stage; two of theirs being acted through the year for one of Shakspeare's or Jonson's; the reason is because there is a certain gaiety in their comedies, and pathos in their more serious plays, which suits generally with all men's humours. Shakspeare's language is likewise a little obsolete, and Jonson's wit falls short of theirs."—Dryden, p. 101.

CHAP. VI.

But it is in vain to seek in Fletcher the strong conceptions of Shakspeare, the Shylocks, the Lears, the Othellos. Schlegel has well said that "scarce any thing has been wanting to give a place to Beaumont and Fletcher among the great dramatists of Europe, but more of seriousness and depth, and the regulating judgment which prescribes the due limits in every part of composition." It was for want of the former qualities that they conceive nothing in tragedy very forcibly; for want of the latter that they spoil their first conception by extravagance and incongruity.*

88. The reputation of Beaumont and Fletcher was at its height, and most of their plays had been given to the stage, when a worthy inheritor of their mantle appeared in Philip Massinger. Of his extant dramas the Virgin Martyr, published in 1622, seems to be the earliest; but we have reason to believe that several are lost; and even this tragedy may have been represented some years before. The far greater part of his remaining pieces fol-

* "Shakspeare," says Dryden, "writ better between man and man, Fletcher betwixt man and woman; consequently the one described friendship better, the other love; yet Shakspeare taught Fletcher to write love, and Juliet and Desdemona are originals. It is true the scholar had the softer soul, but the master had the kinder. ... Shakspeare had an universal mind which comprehended all characters and passions; Fletcher a more confined and limited; for though he treated love in perfection, yet honour, ambition, revenge, and generally all the stronger passions, he either touched not, or not masterly. To conclude all he was a limb of Shakspeare." p. 301. This comparison is rather generally than strictly just, as is often the case with the criticisms of Dryden. That Fletcher wrote better than Shakspeare "between man and woman," or in displaying love, will be granted when he shall be shown to have excelled Ferdinand and Miranda, or Posthumus and Imogen. And, on the other hand, it is unjust to deny him credit for having sometimes touched the stronger emotions, especially honour and ambition, with great skill, though much inferior to that of Shakspeare.

lowed within ten years; the Bashful Lover, which is the latest now known, was written in 1636. Massinger was a gentleman, but in the service, according to the language of those times, of the Pembroke family; his education was at the university, his acquaintance both with books and with the manners of the court is familiar, his style and sentiments are altogether those of a man polished by intercourse of good society.

89. Neither in his own age nor in modern times, does Massinger seem to have been put on a level with Fletcher or Jonson. Several of his plays, as has been just observed, are said to have perished in manuscript; few were represented after the restoration; and it is only in consequence of his having met with more than one editor, who has published his collected works in a convenient form, that he is become tolerably familiar to the general reader. He is however far more intelligible than Fletcher; his text has not given so much embarrassment from corruption, and his general style is as perspicuous as we ever find it in the dramatic poets of that age. The obscure passages in Massinger, after the care that Gifford has taken, are by no means frequent.

General nature of his dramas.

90. Five of his sixteen plays are tragedies, that is, are concluded in death; of the rest, no one belongs to the class of mere comedy, but by the depth of the interest, the danger of the virtuous, or the atrocity of the vicious characters, as well as the elevation of the general style, must be ranked with the serious drama, or as it was commonly termed, tragi-comedy. A shade of melancholy

CHAP. VI.

tinges the writings of Massinger; but he sacrifices less than his contemporaries to the public taste for superfluous bloodshed on the stage. In several of his plays, such as the Picture, or the Renegado, where it would have been easy to determine the catastrophe towards tragedy, he has preferred to break the clouds with the radiance of a setting sun. He consulted in this his own genius, not eminently pathetic, nor energetic enough to display the utmost intensity of emotion, but abounding in sweetness and dignity, apt to delineate the loveliness of virtue, and to delight in its recompence after trial. It has been surmised that the religion of Massinger was that of the church of Rome; a conjecture not improbable, though, considering the ascetic and imaginative piety, which then prevailed in that of England, we need not absolutely go so far for his turn of thought in the Virgin Martyr or the Renegado.

His delineations of character.

91. The most striking excellence of this poet is his conception of character; and in this I must incline to place him above Fletcher, and, if I may venture to say it, even above Jonson. He is free from the hard outline of the one, and the negligent looseness of the other. He has indeed no great variety, and sometimes repeats, with such bare modifications as the story demands, the type of his first design. Thus the extravagance of conjugal affection is pourtrayed, feeble in Theodosius, frantic in Domitian, selfish in Sforza, suspicious in Mathias; and the same impulses of doting love return upon us in the guilty eulogies of Mallefort on his daughter. The vindictive

hypocrisy of Montreville in the Unnatural Combat, has nearly its counterpart in that of Francesco in the Duke of Milan, and is again displayed with more striking success in Luke. This last villain indeed, and that original, masterly, inimitable conception, Sir Giles Overreach, are sufficient to establish the rank of Massinger in this great province of dramatic art. But his own disposition led him more willingly to pictures of moral beauty. A peculiar refinement, a mixture of gentleness and benignity with noble daring, belong to some of his favourite characters, to Pisander in the Bondman, to Antonio in A Very Woman, to Charolois in the Fatal Dowry. It may be readily supposed that his female characters are not wanting in these graces. It seems to me that he has more variety in his women than in the other sex, and that they are less mannered than the heroines of Fletcher. A slight degree of error or passion in Sophia, Eudocia, Marcelia, without weakening our sympathy, serves both to prevent the monotony of perpetual rectitude, so often insipid in fiction, and to bring forward the development of the story.

His subjects.

92. The subjects chosen by Massinger are sometimes historical, but others seem to have been taken from French or Italian novels, and those so obscure, that his editor Gifford, a man of much reading and industry, has seldom traced them. This indeed was an usual practice of our ancient dramatists. Their works have consequently a romantic character, presenting as little of the regular Plautine comedy, as of the Greek forms of tragedy. They are merely novels in action,

CHAP. VI.

following probably their models with no great variance, except the lower and lighter episodes which it was always more or less necessary to combine with the story. It is from this choice of subjects, perhaps, as much as from the peculiar temper of the poets, that love is the predominant affection of the mind which they display; not cold and conventional, as we commonly find it on the French stage, but sometimes, as the novelists of the South were prone to delineate its emotions, fiery, irresistible, and almost resembling the fatalism of ancient tragedy, sometimes a subdued captive at the chariot-wheels of honour or religion. The range of human passion is consequently far less extensive than in Shakspeare; but the variety of circumstance, and the modifications of the paramount affection itself, compensated for this deficiency.

Beauty of his style.

93. Next to the grace and dignity of sentiment in Massinger, we must praise those qualities in his style. Every modern critic has been struck by the peculiar beauty of his language. In his harmonious swell of numbers, in his pure and genuine idiom, which a text, by good fortune and the diligence of its last editor, far less corrupt than that of Fletcher, enables us to enjoy, we find an unceasing charm. The poetical talents of Massinger were very considerable; his taste superior to that of his contemporaries; the colouring of his imagery is rarely overcharged; a certain redundancy, as some may account it, gives fullness, or what the painters call *impasto*, to his style, and if it might not always conduce to effect on the

stage, is on the whole suitable to the character of his composition.

Inferiority of his comic powers.

94. The comic powers of this writer are not on a level with the serious; with some degree of humorous conception he is too apt to aim at exciting ridicule by caricature, and his dialogue wants altogether the sparkling wit of Shakspeare and Fletcher. Whether from a consciousness of this defect, or from an unhappy compliance with the viciousness of the age, no writer is more contaminated by gross indecency. It belongs indeed chiefly, not perhaps exclusively, to the characters he would render odious; but upon them he has bestowed this flower of our early theatre with no sparing hand. Few, it must be said, of his plays are incapable of representation merely on this account, and the offence is therefore more incurable in Fletcher.

Some of his tragedies particularized.

95. Among the tragedies of Massinger, I should incline to prefer the Duke of Milan. The plot borrows enough from history to give it dignity, and to counterbalance in some measure the predominance of the passion of love which the invented parts of the drama exhibit. The characters of Sforza, Marcelia, and Francesco, are in Massinger's best manner; the story is skilfully and not improbably developed; the pathos is deeper than we generally find in his writings; the eloquence of language, especially in the celebrated speech of Sforza before the emperor, has never been surpassed by him. Many, however, place the Fatal Dowry still higher. This tragedy furnished Rowe with the story of his Fair Penitent. The supe-

CHAP. VI.

riority of the original, except in suitableness for representation, has long been acknowledged. In the Unnatural Combat, probably among the earliest of Massinger's works, we find a greater energy, a bolder strain of figurative poetry, more command of terror and perhaps of pity, than in any other of his dramas. But the dark shadows of crime and misery which overspread this tragedy belong to rather an earlier period of the English stage than that of Massinger, and were not congenial to his temper. In the Virgin Martyr, he has followed the Spanish model of religious Autos, with many graces of language and a beautiful display of Christian heroism in Dorothea; but the tragedy is in many respects unpleasing.

And of his other plays.

96. The Picture, The Bondman, and A Very Woman may perhaps be reckoned the best among the tragi-comedies of Massinger. But the general merits as well as defects of this writer are perceptible in all; and the difference between these and the rest is not such as to be apparent to every reader. Two others are distinguishable as more English than the rest; the scene lies at home, and in the age; and to these the common voice has assigned a superiority. They are A New Way to Pay Old Debts, and The City Madam. A character drawn, as it appears, from reality, and though darkly wicked, not beyond the province of the higher comedy, Sir Giles Overreach, gives the former drama a striking originality and an impressive vigour. It retains, alone among the productions of Massinger, a place on the stage. Gifford inclines to prefer the City Madam; which, no doubt,

by the masterly delineation of Luke, a villain of a different order from Overreach, and a larger portion of comic humour and satire than is usual with this writer, may dispute the palm. It seems to me that there is more violent improbability in the conduct of the plot, than in A New Way to Pay Old Debts.

Ford.

97. Massinger, as a tragic writer, appears to me second only to Shakspeare; in the higher comedy, I can hardly think him inferior to Jonson. In wit and sprightly dialogue, as well as in knowledge of theatrical effect, he falls very much below Fletcher. These however are the great names of the English stage. At a considerable distance below Massinger, we may place his contemporary John Ford. In the choice of tragic subjects from obscure fictions which have to us the charm of entire novelty, they resemble each other; but in the conduct of their fable, in the delineation of their characters, each of these poets has his distinguishing excellencies. "I know," says Gifford, "few things more difficult to account for, than the deep and lasting impression made by the more tragic portions of Ford's poetry." He succeeds however pretty well in accounting for it; the situations are awfully interesting, the distress intense, the thoughts and language becoming the expression of deep sorrow. Ford, with none of the moral beauty and elevation of Massinger, has in a much higher degree, the power over tears; we sympathize even with his vicious characters, with Giovanni and Annabella and Bianca. Love, and love in guilt or sorrow, is almost exclusively the emotion he pour-

CHAP. VI.

trays; no heroic passion, no sober dignity, will be found in his tragedies. But he conducts his stories well and without confusion; his scenes are often highly wrought and effective; his characters, with no striking novelty, are well supported; he is seldom extravagant or regardless of probability. The Broken Heart has generally been reckoned his finest tragedy; and if the last act had been better prepared by bringing the love of Calantha for Ithocles more fully before the reader in the earlier part of the play, there would be very few passages of deeper pathos in our dramatic literature. "The style of Ford," it is said by Gifford, "is altogether original and his own. Without the majestic march which distinguishes the poetry of Massinger, and with little or none of that light and playful humour which characterises the dialogue of Fletcher, or even of Shirley, he is yet elegant, and easy, and harmonious; and though rarely sublime, yet sufficiently elevated for the most pathetic tones of that passion on whose romantic energies he chiefly delighted to dwell." Yet he censures afterwards Ford's affectation of uncouth phrases, and perplexity of language. Of comic ability this writer does not display one particle. Nothing can be meaner than those portions of his dramas which, in compliance with the prescribed rules of that age, he devotes to the dialogue of servants or buffoons.

Shirley.

98. Shirley is a dramatic writer much inferior to those who have been mentioned, but has acquired some degree of reputation, or at least notoriety of name, in consequence of the new edition of his plays. These are between twenty and thirty in

number; some of them, however, written in conjunction with his fellow dramatists. A few of these are tragedies, a few are comedies drawn from English manners; but in the greater part we find the favourite style of that age, the characters foreign and of elevated rank, the interest serious, but not always of buskined dignity, the catastrophe fortunate; all, in short, that has gone under the vague appellation of tragi-comedy. Shirley has no originality, no force in conceiving or delineating character, little of pathos, and less, perhaps, of wit; his dramas produce no deep impression in reading, and of course can leave none in the memory. But his mind was poetical, his better characters, especially females, express pure thoughts in pure language; he is never tumid or affected and seldom obscure; the incidents succeed rapidly, the personages are numerous, and there is a general animation in the scenes, which causes us to read him with some pleasure. No very good play, nor, possibly, any very good scene could be found in Shirley; but he has many lines of considerable beauty. Among his comedies the Gamesters may be reckoned the best. Charles I. is said to have declared that it was "the best play he had seen these seven years;" and it has even been added that the story was of his royal suggestion. It certainly deserves praise both for language and construction of the plot, and it has the advantage of exposing vice to ridicule; but the ladies of that court, the fair forms whom Vandyke has immortalised, must have been very different indeed from their posterity, as in truth I believe they were, if they

CHAP. VI.

could sit it through. The Ball, and also some more among the comedies of Shirley are so far remarkable and worthy of being read, that they bear witness to a more polished elegance of manners, and a more free intercourse in the higher class, than we find in the comedies of the preceding reign. A queen from France, and that queen Henrietta Maria, was better fitted to give this tone than Anne of Denmark. But it is not from Shirley's pictures that we can draw the most favourable notions of the morals of that age.

Heywood.

99. Heywood is a writer still more fertile than Shirley; between forty and fifty plays are ascribed to him. We have mentioned one of the best in the former volume, ante-dating, perhaps, its appearance by a few years. In the English Traveller he has returned to something like the subject of A Woman Killed with Kindness, but with less success. This play is written in verse, and with that ease and perspicuity, seldom rising to passion or figurative poetry, which distinguishes this dramatist. Young Geraldine is a beautiful specimen of the Platonic, or rather inflexibly virtuous lover whom the writers of this age delighted to pourtray. On the other hand it is difficult to pronounce whether the lady is a thorough paced hypocrite in the first acts, or falls from virtue, like Mrs. Frankfort, on the first solicitation of a stranger. In either case the character is unpleasing, and, we may hope, improbable. The under plot of this play is largely borrowed from the Mostellaria of Plautus, and is diverting, though somewhat absurd. Heywood seldom rises to much vigour of

poetry; but his dramatic invention is ready, his style is easy, his characters do not transgress the boundaries of nature, and it is not surprising that he was popular in his own age.

Webster.

100. Webster belongs to the first part of the reign of James. He possessed very considerable powers, and ought to be ranked, I think, the next below Ford. With less of poetic grace than Shirley, he had incomparably more vigour; with less of nature and simplicity than Heywood, he had a more elevated genius, and a bolder pencil. But the deep sorrows and terrors of tragedy were peculiarly his province. "His imagination," says his last editor, "had a fond familiarity with objects of awe and fear. The silence of the sepulchre, the sculptures of marble monuments, the knolling of church bells, the cearments of the corpse, the yew that roots itself in dead men's graves, are the illustrations that most readily present themselves to his imagination." I think this well-written sentence a little one-sided, and hardly doing justice to the variety of Webster's power; but in fact he was as deeply tainted as any of his contemporaries with the savage taste of the Italian school, and in the Duchess of Malfy, scarcely leaves enough on the stage to bury the dead.

His Duchess of Malfy.

101. This is the most celebrated of Webster's dramas. The story is taken from Bandello, and has all that accumulation of wickedness and horror which the Italian novelists perversely described, and our tragedians as perversely imitated. But the scenes are wrought up with skill, and produce a strong impression. Webster has a superiority in

CHAP. VI.

delineating character above many of the old dramatists; he is seldom extravagant beyond the limits of conceivable nature; we find the guilt, or even the atrocity, of human passions, but not that incarnation of evil spirits which some more ordinary dramatists loved to exhibit. In the character of the Duchess of Malfy herself there wants neither originality nor skill of management, and I do not know that any dramatist after Shakspeare would have succeeded better in the difficult scene where she discloses her love to an inferior. There is perhaps a little failure in dignity and delicacy, especially towards the close; but the Duchess of Malfy is not drawn as an Isabella or a Portia; she is a love-sick widow, virtuous and true-hearted, but more intended for our sympathy than our reverence.

Vittoria Corombona.

102. The White Devil, or Vittoria Corombona, is not much inferior in language and spirit to the Duchess of Malfy; but the plot is more confused, less interesting and worse conducted. Mr. Dyce, the late editor of Webster, praises the dramatic vigour of the part of Vittoria, but justly differs from Lamb, who speaks of "the innocence-resembling boldness" she displays in the trial scene. It is rather a delineation of desperate guilt, losing in a counterfeited audacity all that could seduce or conciliate the tribunal. Webster's other plays are less striking; in Appius and Virginia he has done perhaps better than any one who has attempted a subject not on the whole very promising for tragedy; several of the scenes are dramatic and effective; the language, as is usually the case

with Webster, is written so as to display an actor's talents, and he has followed the received history sufficiently to abstain from any excess of slaughter at the close. Webster is not without comic wit, as well as a power of imagination; his plays have lately met with an editor of taste enough to admire his beauties, and not very over-partial in estimating them.

103. Below Webster we might enumerate a long list of dramatists under the first Stuarts. Marston is a tumid and ranting tragedian, a wholesale dealer in murders and ghosts. Chapman, who assisted Ben Jonson and some others in comedy, deserves no great praise for his Bussy d'Amboise. The style in this, and in all his tragedies, is extravagantly hyperbolical; he is not very dramatic, nor has any power of exciting emotion except in those who sympathize with a tumid pride and self-confidence. Yet he has more thinking than many of the old dramatists; and the praise of one of his critics, though strongly worded, is not without some foundation, that we "seldom find richer contemplations on the nature of man and the world." There is also a poetic impetuosity in Chapman, such as has redeemed his translation of Homer, by which we are hurried along. His tragi-comedies, All Fools and The Gentleman-usher, are perhaps superior to his tragedies.* Rowley and Le Tourneur, especially the former, have occasionally good lines, but we cannot say that they were very superior dramatists. Rowley, however, was often in comic partnership

* Chapman is well reviewed and at length, in an article of the Retrospective Review, vol. IV. p. 333., and again in vol. V.

CHAP. VI.

with Massinger. Dekker merits a higher rank; he co-operated with Massinger in some of his plays, and in his own displays some energy of passion and some comic humour. Middleton belongs to this lower class of dramatic writers; his tragedy entitled "Women beware Women" is founded on the story of Bianca Cappello; it is full of action, but the characters are all too vicious to be interesting, and the language does not rise much above mediocrity. In comedy, Middleton deserves more praise. "A Trick to catch the Old One" and several others that bear his name are amusing and spirited. But Middleton wrote chiefly in conjunction with others, and sometimes with Jonson and Massinger.

CHAP. VII.

HISTORY OF POLITE LITERATURE IN PROSE FROM 1600 TO 1650.

SECT. I.

Italian Writers — Boccalini — Grammatical and Critical Works — Gracian French Writers — Balzac — Voiture — French Academy — Vaugelas — Patru and Le Maistre — Style of English Prose — Earl of Essex — Knolles — Several other English Writers.

Decline of taste in Italy.

1. It would be vain probably to inquire from what general causes we should deduce the decline of taste in Italy. None at least have occurred to my mind, relating to political or social circumstances, upon which we could build more than one of those sophistical theories, which assume a causal relation between any concomitant events. Bad taste, in fact, whether in literature or the arts, is always ready to seize upon the public, being in many cases no more than a pleasure in faults which are really fitted to please us, and of which it can only be said that they hinder or impair the greater pleasure we should derive from beauties. Among these critical sins, none are so dangerous as the display of ingenious and novel thoughts or turns of phrase. For as such enter into the definition of good writing, it seems very difficult to persuade the world that they can ever be the characteristics of bad writing. The metes and bounds of

CHAP. VII.

ornament, the fine shades of distinction which regulate a judicious choice, are only learned by an attentive as well as a naturally susceptible mind; and it is rarely perhaps that an unprepared multitude does not prefer the worse picture, the worse building, the worse poem, the worse speech to the better. Education, an acquaintance with just criticism, and still more the habitual observation of what is truly beautiful in nature or art, or in the literature of taste, will sometimes generate almost a national tact that rejects the temptations of a meretricious and false style; but experience has shown that this happy state of public feeling will not be very durable. Whatever might be the cause of it, this age of the Italian seicentisti has been reckoned almost as inauspicious to good writing in prose as in verse. "If we except," says Tiraboschi, "the Tuscans and a very few more, never was our language so neglected as in this period. We can scarce bear to read most of the books that were published, so rude and full of barbarisms is their style. Few had any other aim than to exercise their wit in conceits and metaphors; and so long as they could scatter them profusely over their pages, cared nothing for the choice of phrases or the purity of grammar. Their eloquence on public occasions was intended only for admiration and applause, not to persuade, or move."* And this, he says, is applicable alike to their Latin and Italian, their sacred and profane harangues. The academical discourses, of which

* Vol. xi. p. 415.

Dati has collected many in his Prose Fiorentine, are poor in comparison with those of the sixteenth.*

2. A later writer than Tiraboschi has thought this sentence against the seicentisti a little too severe, and condemning equally with him the bad taste characteristic of that age, endeavours to rescue a few from the general censure.† It is at least certain that the insipidity of the cinque cento writers, their long periods void of any but the most trivial meaning, their affectation of the faults of Cicero's manner in their own language, ought not to be overlooked or wholly pardoned, while we dwell on an opposite defect of their successors, the perpetual desire to be novel, brilliant or profound. These may doubtless be the more offensive of the two; but they are perhaps not less likely to be mingled with something really worth reading.

Style of Galileo

3. It will not be expected that we can mention many Italian books, after what has been said, which come very precisely within the class of polite literature, or claim any praise on the ground of style. Their greatest luminary, Galileo, wrote with clearness, elegance and spirit; no one among the moderns had so entirely rejected a dry and technical manner of teaching, and thrown such attractions round the form of truth. Himself a poet and a critic, he did not hesitate to ascribe his own philosophical perspicuity to the constant perusal of Ariosto. This I have mentioned in another place; but we cannot too much remember that all objects of intellectual pursuit are as bodies acting with re-

* Vol. xi. p. 415. † Salfi, xiv. 11.

ciprocal forces in one system, being all in relation to the faculties of the mind, which is itself but one; and that the most extensive acquaintance with the various provinces of literature will not fail to strengthen our dominion over those we more peculiarly deem our own. The school of Galileo, especially Torricelli and Redi, were not less distinguished than himself for their union of elegance with philosophy.*

Bentivoglio.

4. The letters of Bentivoglio are commonly known. This epistolary art was always cultivated by the Italians, first in the Latin tongue, and afterwards in their own. Bentivoglio has written with equal dignity and ease. Galileo's letters are also esteemed on account of their style as well as of what they contain. In what is more peculiarly called eloquence, the Italians of this age are rather emulous of success than successful; the common defects of taste in themselves, and in those who heard or read them, as well as, in most instances, the uninteresting nature of their subjects exclude them from our notice.

Boccalini's News from Parnassus.

5. Trajan Boccalini was by his disposition inclined to political satire, and possibly to political intrigue; but we have here only to mention the work by which he is best known, Advices from Parnassus (Ragguagli di Parnaso). If the idea of this once popular and celebrated book is not original, which I should rather doubt, though without immediately recognizing a similarity to any thing earlier, (Lucian, the common prototype,

* Salfi, xiv. 12.

excepted) it has at least been an original source. In the general turn of Boccalini's fictions, and perhaps in a few particular inventions, we may sometimes perceive what a much greater man has imitated; they bear a certain resemblance to those of Addison, though the vast superiority of the latter in felicity of execution and variety of invention may almost conceal it. The Ragguagli are a series of despatches from the court of Apollo on Parnassus, where he is surrounded by eminent men of all ages. This fiction becomes in itself very cold and monotonous; yet there is much variety in the subjects of the decisions made by the god with the advice of his counsellors, and some strokes of satire are well hit, though more perhaps fail of effect. But we cannot now catch the force of every passage. Boccalini is full of allusions to his own time, even where the immediate subject seems ancient. This book was published at Venice in 1612; at a time when the ambition of Spain was regarded with jealousy by patriotic Italians, who thought that pacific republic their bulwark and their glory. He inveighs therefore against the military spirit and the profession of war, "necessary sometimes, but so fierce and inhuman that no fine expressions can make it honourable."* Nor is he less severe on the vices of kings, nor less ardent in his eulogies of liberty; the government of Venice being reckoned, and not altogether untruly, an asylum of free thought and action in comparison with that of Spain.

* Ragg. 75.

CHAP. VII.

Aristotle, he reports in one of his despatches, was besieged in his villa on Parnassus by a number of armed men belonging to different princes, who insisted on his retracting the definition he had given of a tyrant, that he was one who governed for his own good and not that of the people, because it would apply to every prince, all reigning for their own good. The philosopher, alarmed by this demand, altered his definition; which was to run thus, that tyrants were certain persons of old time, whose race was now quite extinct.* Boccalini however, takes care, in general, to mix something of playfulness with his satire, so that it could not be resented without apparent ill-nature. It seems, indeed, to us free from invective, and rather meant to sting than to wound. But this, if a common rumour be true, did not secure him against a beating of which he died. The style of Boccalini is said by the critics to be clear and fluent, rather than correct or elegant; and he displays the taste of his times by extravagant metaphors. But to foreigners, who regard this less, his News from Parnassus, unequal, of course, and occasionally tedious, must appear to contain many ingenious allusions, judicious criticisms and acute remarks.

His Pietra del Paragone.

6. The Pietra del Paragone by the same author is an odd, and rather awkward mixture of reality and fiction, all levelled at the court of Spain, and designed to keep alive a jealousy of its ambition. It is a kind of episode or supplement to the Ragguagli di Parnaso, the leading invention being preserved. Boccalini is an interesting writer on ac-

* Ragg. 76.

count of the light he throws on the history and sentiments of Italy. He is in this work a still bolder writer than in the former; not only censuring Spain without mercy, but even the Venetian aristocracy, observing upon the insolence of the young nobles towards the citizens, though he justifies the senate for not punishing the former more frequently with death by public execution, which would lower the nobility in the eyes of the people. They were however, he says, as severely punished, when their conduct was bad, by exclusion from offices of trust. The Pietra del Paragone is a kind of political, as the Ragguagli is a critical miscellany.

Ferrante Pallavicino.

7. About twenty years after Boccalini, a young man appeared, by name Ferrante Pallavicino, who, with a fame more local and transitory, with less respectability of character, and probably with inferior talents, trod to a certain degree in his steps. As Spain had been the object of satire to the one, so was Rome to the other. Urban VIII., an ambitious pontiff, and vulnerable in several respects, was attacked by an imprudent and self-confident enemy, safe, as he imagined, under the shield of Venice. But Pallavicino, having been trepanned into the power of the pope, lost his head at Avignon. None of his writings have fallen in my way; that most celebrated at the time, and not wholly dissimilar in the conception to the News from Parnassus, was entitled The Courier robbed; a series of imaginary letters which such a fiction gave him a pretext for bringing together. Perhaps we may consider Pallavicino as rather a

CHAP. VII.

counterpart to Jordano Bruno, in the satirical character of the latter, than to Boccalini.*

Dictionary Della Crusca.

8. The Italian language itself, grammatically considered, was still assiduously cultivated. The Academicians of Florence published the first edition of their celebrated Vocabolario della Crusca in 1613. It was avowedly founded on Tuscan principles, setting up the fourteenth century as the Augustan period of the language, which they disdained to call Italian; and though not absolutely excluding the great writers of the sixteenth age whom Tuscany had not produced, giving in general a manifest preference to their own. Italy has rebelled against this tyranny of Florence, as she did, in the Social War, against that of Rome. Her Lombard and Romagnol and Neapolitan writers have claimed the rights of equal citizenship, and fairly won them in the field of literature. The Vocabulary itself was not received as a legislative code. Beni assailed it by his Anti-Crusca the same year; many invidiously published marginal notes to point out the inaccuracies; and in the frequent revisions and enlargements of this dictionary the exclusive character it affected has, I believe, been nearly lost.

Grammatical works. Buonmattei Bartoli.

9. Buonmattei, himself a Florentine, was the first who completed an extensive and methodical grammar, "developing," says Tiraboschi, "the whole economy and system of our language." It was published entire, after some previous impressions of parts, with the title, Della Lingua Toscana, in 1643. This has been reckoned a standard work,

* Corniani, viii. 205. Salfi, xiv. 46.

both for its authority, and for the clearness, precision and elegance with which it is written; but it betrays something of an academical and Florentine spirit in the rigour of its grammatical criticism.* Bartoli, a Ferrarese Jesuit, and a man of extensive learning, attacked that dogmatic school, who were accustomed to proscribe common phrases with a *Non si può* (It cannot be used), in a treatise entitled Il torto ed il diritto del Non si può. His object was to justify many expressions thus authoritatively condemned, by the examples of the best writers. This book was a little later than the middle of the century.†

Tassoni's remarks on Petrarch.

10. Petrarch had been the idol, in general, of the preceding age; and, above all, he was the peculiar divinity of the Florentines. But this seventeenth century was in the productions of the mind a period of revolutionary innovation; men dared to ask why, as well as what, they ought to worship; and sometimes the same who rebelled against Aristotle, as an infallible guide, were equally contumacious in dealing with the great names of literature. Tassoni published in 1609 his Observations on the poems of Petrarch. They are not written, as we should now think, adversely to one whom he professes to honour above all lyric poets in the world, and though his critical remarks are somewhat minute, they seem hardly unfair. A writer like Petrarch, whose fame has been raised so high by his style, is surely amenable to this severity of

* Tiraboschi, xi. 409. Salfi, xiii. 398.

† Corniani, vii. 259. Salfi, xiii. 417.

CHAP. VII.

examination. The finest sonnets Tassoni generally extols, but gives a preference, on the whole, to the odes; which, even if an erroneous judgment, cannot be called unfair upon the author of both.* He produces many parallel passages from the Latin poems of Petrarch himself, as well as from the ancients and from the earlier Italians and Provençals. The manner of Tassoni is often humorous, original, intrepid, satirical on his own times; he was a man of real taste, and no servile worshipper of names.

Galileo's remarks on Tasso.

11. Galileo was less just in his observations upon Tasso. They are written with severity and sometimes an insulting tone towards the great poet, passing over generally the most beautiful verses, though he sometimes bestows praise. The object is to point out the imitations of Tasso from Ariosto, and his general inferiority.

Sforza Pallavicino;

The Observations on the Art of Writing by Sforza Pallavicino, the historian of the council of Trent, published at Rome, 1646, is a work of general criticism containing many good remarks. What he says of imitation is worthy of being compared with Hurd; though he will be found not to have analysed the subject with anything like so much acuteness, nor was this to be expected in his age. Pallavicino has an ingenious remark, that elegance of style is produced by short metaphors, or *metaforette* as he calls them, which give us a more lively apprehension of an object than its proper name. This seems to mean

* Tutte le rime, tutti i versi in generale del Petrarca lo fecero poeta; ma le canzoni, per quanto a mi ne pare, furono quelle, che poeta grande e famoso lo fecero. p. 46.

only single words in a figurative sense, as opposed to phrases of the same kind. He writes in a pleasing manner, and is an accomplished critic without pedantry. Salfi has given rather a long analysis of this treatise.* The same writer, treading in the steps of Corniani, has extolled some Italian critics of this period, whose writings I have never seen; Beni, author of a prolix commentary in Latin on the poetics of Aristotle; Peregrino, not inferior, perhaps, to Pallavicino, though less known, whose theories are just and deep, but not expressed with sufficient perspicuity; and Fioretti, who assumed the fictitious name of Udeno Nisieli, and presided over an academy at Florence denominated the Apatisti. The Progymnasmi Poetici of this writer, if we may believe Salfi, ascend to that higher theory of criticism which deduces its rules, not from precedents or arbitrary laws, but from the nature of the human mind, and has, in modern times, been distinguished by the name of æsthetic.†

And other critical writers.

Prolusiones of Strada.

12. In the same class of polite letters as these Italian writings, we may place the Prolusiones Academicæ of Famianus Strada. They are agreeably written, and bespeak a cultivated taste. The best is the sixth of the second book, containing the imitations of six Latin poets, which Addison has made well known, (as I hope,) to every reader in the 115th and 119th numbers of the Guardian. It is here that all may judge of this happy and graceful fiction; but those who have read the

* Vol. xiii. p. 440

† Corniani, vii. 156. Salfi, xiii. 426.

CHAP. VII.

Latin imitations themselves, will perceive that Strada has often caught the tone of the ancients with considerable felicity. Lucan and Ovid are, perhaps, best counterfeited, Virgil not quite so well, and Lucretius worst of the six. The other two are Statius and Claudian.* In almost every instance the subject chosen is appropriated to the characteristic peculiarities of the poet.

Spanish prose. Gracian.

13. The style of Gongora which deformed the poetry of Spain extended its influence over prose. A writer named Gracian, (it seems to be doubtful which of two brothers, Lorenzo and Balthazar,) excelled Gongora himself in the affectation, the refinement, the obscurity of his style. "The most voluminous of his works," says Bouterwek, "bears the affected title of El Criticon. It is an allegorical picture of the whole course of human life divided into Crises, that is, sections according to fixed points of view, and clothed in the formal garb of a pompous romance. It is scarcely possible to open any page of this book without recognizing in the author a man who is in many respects far from common, but who from the ambition of being entirely uncommon in thinking and writing studiously and ingeniously, avoids nature and good taste. A profusion of the most ambiguous subtleties expressed in ostentatious language, are scattered throughout the work; and these are the more offensive, in consequence of their union with the really grand view of the relationship of man to nature and his Creator, which forms the subject of

* A writer quoted in Blount's Censura Autorum, p. 859., praises the imitation of Claudian above the rest, but thinks all excellent.

the treatise. Gracian would have been an excellent writer had he not so anxiously wished to be an extraordinary one."* CHAP. VII.

14. The writings of Gracian seem in general to be the quintessence of bad taste. The worst of all, probably, is El Eroe, which is admitted to be almost unintelligible by the number of far-fetched expressions, though there is more than one French translation of it. El politico Fernando, a panegyric on Ferdinand the Catholic, seems as empty as it is affected and artificial. The style of Gracian is always pointed, emphatic, full of that which looks like profundity or novelty, though neither deep nor new. He seems to have written on a maxim he recommends to the man of the world; "if he desires that all should look up to him, let him permit himself to be known, but not to be understood."† His treatise entitled Agudeza y arte di ingenio is a system of concetti, digested under their different heads, and selected from Latin, Italian and Spanish writers of that and the preceding age. It is said in the Biographie Universelle that this work, though too metaphysical, is useful in the critical history of literature. Gracian obtained a certain degree of popularity in France and England.

French prose. Du Vair.

15. The general taste of French writers in the sixteenth century, as we have seen, was simple and lively, full of sallies of natural wit and a certain archness of observation, but deficient in

* Hist. of Spanish Literature, p. 533.

† Si quiere que le veneren todos, permitase al conocimiento, no à la comprehension.

CHAP. VII.

those higher qualities of language which the study of the ancients had taught men to admire. In public harangues, in pleadings and in sermons, these characteristics of the French manner were either introduced out of place, or gave way to a tiresome pedantry. Du Vair was the first who endeavoured to bring in a more elaborate and elevated diction. Nor was this confined to the example he gave. In 1607 he published a treatise on French eloquence, and on the causes through which it had remained at so low a point. This work relates chiefly to the eloquence of the bar, or at least that of public speakers, and the causes which he traces are chiefly such as would operate on that kind alone. But some of his observations are applicable to style in the proper sense; and his treatise has been reckoned the first which gave France the rules of good writing, and the desire to practise them.* A modern critic who censures the Latinisms of Du Vair's style, admits that his treatise on eloquence makes an epoch in the language.†

Balzac.

16. A more distinguished æra, however, is dated from 1625, when the letters of Balzac were published.‡ There had indeed been a few inter-

* Gibert, Jugemens des Savans sur les auteurs qui ont traité de la rhétorique. This work is annexed to some editions of Baillet. Goujet has copied or abridged Gibert, without distinct acknowledgement, and not always carefully preserving the sense.

† Neufchateau, préface aux Œuvres de Pascal, p. 181.

‡ The same writer fixes on this as an epoch, and it was generally admitted in the seventeenth century. The editor of Balzac's Works in 1665, says, after speaking of the unformed state of the French language, full of provincial idioms and incorrect phrases; M. de Balzac est venu en ce temps de confusion et de désordre, où toutes les lectures qu'il faisoit, et toutes les actions qu'il entendoit lui devoient etre

mediate works, which contributed, though now little known, to the improvement of the language. Among these the translation of Florus by Coeffeteau was reckoned a masterpiece of French style, and Vaugelas refers more frequently to this than to any other book. The French were very strong in translations from the classical writers; and to this they are certainly much indebted for the purity and correctness they reached in their own lan-

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suspectes, où il avoit à se défier de tous les maitres et de tous les exemples; et où il ne pouvoit arriver à son but qu'en s'éloignant de tous les chemins battus, ni marcher dans la bonne route qu'après se l'être ouverte à lui même. Il l'a ouverte en effet, et pour lui et pour les autres; il y a fait entrer un grand nombre d'heureux génies, dont il etoit le guide et le modèle: et si la France voit aujourd'hui que ses écrivains sont plus polis et plus réguliers, que ceux d'Espagne et d'Italie, il faut qu'elle en rende l'honneur à ce grand homme, dont la mémoire lui doit être en vénération. . . . La même obligation que nous avons a M. de Malherbe pour la poésie, nous l'avons a M. de Balzac pour la prose; il lui a prescrit des bornes et des régles; il lui a donné de la douceur et de la force, il a montré que l'éloquence doit avoir des accords, aussi bien que la musique, et il a sçu mêler si adroitement cette diversité de sons et de cadences, qu'il n'est point de plus délicieux concert que celui de ses paroles. C'est en plaçant tous les mots avec tant d'ordre et de justesse qu'il ne laisse rien de mol ni de foible dans son discours, &c. This regard to the cadence of his periods is characteristic of Balzac. It has not, in general, been much practised in France, notwithstanding some splendid exceptions, especially in Bossuet. Olivet observes, that it was the peculiar glory of Balzac to have shown the capacity of the language for this rhythm. Hist. de l'Acad. Française, p. 84. But has not Du Vair some claim also? Neufchateau gives a much more limited eulogy of Balzac. Il avoit pris à la lettre les reflections de Du Vair sur la trop grande bassesse de notre éloquence. Il s'en forma une haute idée; mais il se trompe d'abord dans l'application, car il porta dans le style epistolaire qui doit etre familier et leger, l'enflure hyperbolique, la pompe, et le nombre, qui ne convient qu'aux grandes déclamations et aux harangues oratoires. . . . Ce défaut de Balzac contribua peutêtre à son succès; car le gout n'étoit pas formé; mais il se corrigea dans la suite, et en parcourant son recueil on s'aperçoit des progrès sensibles qu'il faisoit avec l'age. Ce recueil si précieux pour l'histoire de notre littérature a eu long temps une vogue extraordinaire. Nos plus grands auteurs l'avoient bien étudié. Molière lui a emprunté quelques idées.

CHAP. VII.

Character of his writings

guage. These translators, however, could only occupy a secondary place. Balzac himself is hardly read. "The polite world," it was said a hundred years since, "knows nothing now of these works, which were once its delight." * But his writings are not formed to delight those, who wish either to be merry or wise, to laugh or to learn; yet he has real excellencies, besides those which may be deemed relative to the age in which he came. His language is polished, his sentiments are just, but sometimes common, the cadence of his periods is harmonious, but too artificial and uniform; on the whole he approaches to the tone of a languid sermon, and leaves a tendency to yawn. But in his time superficial truths were not so much proscribed as at present; the same want of depth belongs to almost all the moralists in Italian and in modern Latin. Balzac is a moralist with a pure heart, and a love of truth and virtue, somewhat alloyed by the spirit of flattery towards persons, however he may declaim about courts and courtiers in general, a competent erudition and a good deal of observation of the world. In his Aristippe, addressed to Christina, and consequently a late work, he deals much in political precepts and remarks, some of which might be read with advantage. But he was accused of borrowing his thoughts from the ancients, which the author of an Apology for Balzac seems not wholly to deny. This apology indeed had been produced by a book on the Conformity of the eloquence of M. Balzac with that of the ancients.

* Goujet, i. 426.

CHAP. VII.

His letters.

17. The letters of Balzac are in twenty-seven books; they begin in 1620, and end about 1653; the first portion having appeared in 1625. "He passed all his life, says Vigneul-Marville, in writing letters, without ever catching the right characteristics of that style." * This demands a peculiar ease and naturalness of expression, for want of which they seem no genuine exponents of friendship or gallantry, and hardly of polite manners. His wit was not free from pedantry, and did not come from him spontaneously. Hence he was little fitted to address ladies, even the Rambouillets; and indeed he had acquired so laboured and artificial a way of writing letters, that even those to his sister, though affectionate, smell too much of the lamp. His advocates admit that they are to be judged rather by the rules of oratorical than epistolary composition.

18. In the moral dissertations, such as that entitled the Prince, this elaborate manner is of course not less discernible, but not so unpleasant or out of place. Balzac has been called the father of the French language, the master and model of the great men who have followed him. But it is confessed by all that he wanted the fine taste to regulate his style according to the subject. Hence he is pompous and inflated upon ordinary topics; and in a country so quick to seize the ridiculous as his own, not all his nobleness, purity and vigour of style, not the passages of eloquence which we

* Mélanges de Littérature, vol. i. p. 126. He adds however that Balzac had "un talent particulier pour embellir notre langue." The writer whom I quote under the name of Vigneul-Marville which he assumed was D'Argonne, a Benedictine of Rouen.

CHAP. VII.

often find, have been sufficient to redeem him from the sarcasms of those who have had more power to amuse. The stateliness however of Balzac is less offensive and extravagant than the affected intensity of language which distinguishes the style of the present age on both sides of the Channel, and which is in fact a much worse modification of the same fault.

Voiture. Hotel Rambouillet.

19. A contemporary and rival of Balzac, though very unlike in most respects, was Voiture. Both one and the other were received with friendship and admiration in a celebrated society of Paris, the first which, on this side of the Alps, united the aristocracy of rank and of genius in one circle, that of the Hotel Rambouillet. Catherine de Vivonne, widow of the Marquis de Rambouillet, was the owner of this mansion. It was frequented, during the long period of her life, by all that was distinguished in France, by Richelieu and Condé, as much as by Corneille, and a long host of inferior men of letters. The heiress of this family, Julie d'Angennes, beautiful and highly accomplished, became the central star of so bright a galaxy. The love of intellectual attainments, both in mother and daughter, the sympathy and friendship they felt for those who displayed them, as well as their moral worth, must render their names respectable; but these were in some measure sullied by false taste and what we may consider an habitual affectation even in their conduct. We can scarcely give another name to the caprice of Julia, who, in the fashion of romance, compelled the Duke of Montausier to carry on a twelve

years' courtship, and only married him in the decline of her beauty. This patient lover, himself one of the most remarkable men in the court of Louis XIV., had many years before presented her with what has been called The Garland of Julia, a collection to which the poets and wits of Paris had contributed. Every flower, represented in a drawing, had its appropriate little poem, and all conspired to the praise of Julia.

20. Voiture is chiefly known by his letters; his other writings, at least, are inferior. These begin about 1627, and are addressed to Madame de Rambouillet and to several other persons of both sexes. Though much too laboured and affected, they are evidently the original type of the French epistolary school, including those in England who have formed themselves upon it. Pope very frequently imitated Voiture; Walpole not so much in his general correspondence, but he knew how to fall into it. The object was to say what meant little with the utmost novelty in the mode, and with the most ingenious compliment to the person addressed; so that he should admire himself, and admire the writer. They are of course very tiresome after a short time; yet their ingenuity is not without merit. Balzac is more solemn and dignified, and it must be owned that he has more meaning. Voiture seems to have fancied that good sense spoils a man of wit. But he has not so much wit as *esprit;* and his letters serve to exemplify the meaning of that word. Pope, in addressing ladies, was nearly the ape of Voiture. It was unfortunately thought necessary, in such a

correspondence, either to affect despairing love, which was to express itself with all possible gaiety, or where love was too presumptuous, as with the Rambouillets, to pour out a torrent of nonsensical flattery, which was to be rendered tolerable by far-fetched turns of thought. Voiture has the honour of having rendered this style fashionable. But if the bad taste of others had not perverted his own, Voiture would have been a good writer. His letters, especially those written from Spain, are sometimes truly witty, and always vivacious. Voltaire, who speaks contemptuously of Voiture, might have been glad to have been the author of some of his jeux d'esprit; that, for example, addressed to the Prince of Condé in the character of a pike, founded on a game where the Prince had played that fish. We should remember also, that Voiture held his place in good society upon the tacit condition that he should always strive to be witty.*

Establishment of French Academy.

21. But the Hotel Rambouillet, with its false theories of taste derived in a great measure from the romances of Scudery and Calprenede, and encouraged by the agreeably artificial manner of Voiture, would have produced, in all probability, but a transient effect. A far more important event was the establishment of the French Academy. France was ruled by a great minister who

* Nothing, says Olivet, could be more opposite than Balzac and Voiture. L'un se portoit toujours au sublime, l'autre toujours au délicat. L'un avoit une imagination enjouée, qui faisoit prendre à toutes ses pensées un air de galanterie. L'un même lorsqu'il vouloit plaisanter, étoit toujours grave; l'autre, dans les occasions même sérieuses, trouvoit à rire. Hist. de l'Académie, p. 83.

loved her glory and his own. This indeed has been common to many statesmen, but it was a more peculiar honour to Richelieu, that he felt the dignity which letters confer on a nation. He was himself not deficient in literary taste; his epistolary style is manly and not without elegance; he wrote theology in his own name, and history in that of Mezeray; but, what is most to the present purpose, his remarkable fondness for the theatre led him not only to invent subjects for other poets, but, as it has been believed, to compose one forgotten tragi-comedy, Mirame, without assistance.* He availed himself fortunately of an opportunity which almost every statesman would have disregarded, to found the most illustrious institution in the annals of polite literature.

22. The French Academy sprang from a private society of men of letters at Paris, who, about the year 1629, agreed to meet once a week, as at an ordinary visit, conversing on all subjects and especially on literature. Such among them as were authors communicated their works, and had the advantage of free and fair criticism. This continued for three or four years with such harmony and mutual satisfaction, that the old men, who remembered this period, says their historian, Pelisson, looked back upon it as a golden age. They were but nine in number, of whom Gombauld and Chapelain are the only names by any means famous, and their meetings were at first very private. More by degrees were added, among others Boisrobert, a favourite of Richelieu,

* Fontenelle, Hist. du Théatre, p. 96.

CHAP. VII.

who liked to hear from him the news of the town. The Cardinal, pleased with the account of this society, suggested their public establishment. This, it is said, was unpleasing to every one of them, and some proposed to refuse it; but the consideration that the offers of such a man were not to be slighted overpowered their modesty; and they consented to become a royal institution. They now enlarged their numbers, created officers, and began to keep registers of their proceedings. These records commence on March 13. 1634, and are the basis of Pelisson's history. The name of French Academy was chosen after some deliberation. They were established by letters patent in January 1635; which the parliament of Paris enregistered with great reluctance, requiring not only a letter from Richelieu, but an express order from the king; and when this was completed in July 1637, it was with a singular proviso that the Academy should meddle with nothing but the embellishment and improvement of the French language, and such books as might be written by themselves, or by others who should desire their interference. This learned body of lawyers had some jealousy of the innovations of Richelieu; and one of them said it reminded him of the satire of Juvenal, where the senate, after ceasing to bear its part in public affairs, was consulted about the sauce for a turbot.*

Its objects and constitution.

23. The professed object of the Academy was to purify the language from vulgar, technical, or ignorant usages, and to establish a fixed standard.

* Pelisson, Hist. de l'Académie Française.

The Academicians undertook to guard scrupulously the correctness of their own works, examining the arguments, the method, the style, the structure of each particular word. It was proposed by one that they should swear not to use any word which had been rejected by a plurality of votes. They soon began to labour in their vocation, always bringing words to the test of good usage, and deciding accordingly. These decisions are recorded in their registers. Their number was fixed by the letters patent at forty, having a director, chancellor, and secretary; the two former changed every two, afterwards every three months, the last chosen for life. They read discourses weekly; which by the titles of some that Pelisson has given us, seem rather trifling and in the style of the Italian Academics; but this practice was soon disused. Their more important and ambitious occupations were to compile a dictionary and a grammar: Chapelain drew up the scheme of the former, in which it was determined, for the sake of brevity, to give no quotations, but to form it from about twenty-six good authors in prose, and twenty in verse. Vaugelas was entrusted with the chief direction of this work.

It publishes a critique on the Cid.

24. The Academy was subjected in its very infancy, to a severe trial of that literary integrity without which such an institution can only escape from being pernicious to the republic of letters, by becoming too despicable and odious to produce mischief. On the appearance of the Cid, Richelieu, who had taken up a strong prejudice against it, insisted that the Academy should publish their

CHAP. VII.

opinion on this play. The more prudent part of that body were very loth to declare themselves at so early a period of their own existence; but the Cardinal was not apt to take excuses; and a committee of three was appointed to examine the Cid itself and the observations upon it which Scudery had already published. Five months elapsed before the Sentimens de l'Académie Française sur la Tragédie du Cid were made public in November 1637.* These are expressed with much respect for Corneille, and profess to be drawn up with his assent, as well as at the instance of Scudery. It has been not uncommon to treat this criticism as a servile homage to power. But a perusal of it will not lead us to confirm so severe a reproach. The Sentimens de l'Académie are drawn up with great good sense and dignity. The spirit indeed of critical orthodoxy is apparent; yet this was surely pardonable in an age when the violation of rules had as yet produced nothing but such pieces as those of Hardy. It is easy to sneer at Aristotle when we have a Shakspeare; but Aristotle formed his rules on the practice of Sophocles. The Academy could not have done better than by inculcating the soundest rules of criticism, but they were a little too narrow in their application. The particular judgments which they pass on each scene of the play, as well as those on the style, seem for the most part very just, and such as later critics have generally adopted; so that we can really see little ground for the allegation of undue compliance

* Pelisson. The printed edition bears the date of 1638.

with the Cardinal's prejudices, except in the frigid tone of their praise, and in their omission to proclaim that a great dramatic genius had arisen in France.* But this is so much the common vice or blindness of critics, that it may have sprung less from baseness, than from a fear to compromise their own superiority by vulgar admiration. The Academy had great pretensions, and Corneille was not yet the Corneille of France and of the world.

Vaugelas's remarks on the French language.

25. Gibert, Goujet, and other writers enumerate several works on the grammar of the French language in this period. But they were superseded, and we may almost say that an æra was made in the national literature, by the publication of Vaugelas, Rémarques sur la Langue Française, in 1649. Thomas Corneille, who, as well as Patru, published notes on Vaugelas, observes that the language has only been written with politeness since the appearance of these remarks. They were not at first received with general approbation, and some even in later times thought them too scrupulous; but they gradually became of established authority. Vaugelas is always clear, modest, and ingenuous in

* They conclude by saying that in spite of the faults of this play, la naïveté et la vehémence de les passions, la force et la délicatesse de plusieurs de ses pensées, et cet agrément inexplicable qui se mêle dans tous ses défauts lui ont acquis un rang considérable entre les poemes Français de ce genre qui ont le plus donné de satisfaction. Si l'auteur ne doit pas toute sa réputation à son mérite il ne la doit pas toute à son bonheur, et la nature lui a été assez libérale pour excuser la fortune si elle lui a été prodigue.

The Academy justly, in my opinion, blame Corneille for making Chimène consent to marry Rodrigue the same day that he had killed her father. Cela surpasse toute sorte de créance, et ne peut vraisemblablement tomber dans l'ame non seulement d'une sage fille, mais d'une qui seroit le plus dépouillée d'honneur et d'humanité, &c. p. 49.

CHAP. VII.

stating his opinion. His remarks are 547 in number, no gross fault being noticed, nor any one which is not found in good authors. He seldom mentions those whom he censures. His test of correct language is the manner of speaking in use with the best part (la plus saine partie) of the court, conformably with the manner of writing in the best part of contemporary authors. But though we must have recourse to good authors in order to establish an indisputably good usage, yet the court contributes incomparably more than books; the consent of the latter being as it were the seal and confirmation of what is spoken at court, and deciding what is there doubtful. And those who study the best authors get rid of many faults common at court, and acquire a peculiar purity of style. None however can dispense with a knowledge of what is reckoned good language at court, since much that is spoken there will hardly be found in books. In writing it is otherwise, and he admits that the study of good authors will enable us to write well, though we shall write still better by knowing how to speak well. Vaugelas tells us that his knowledge was acquired by long practice at court, and by the conversation of Cardinal Perron and of Coeffeteau.

La Mothe le Vayer.

26. La Mothe le Vayer in his Considérations sur l'Eloquence Française, 1647, has endeavoured to steer a middle course between the old and the new schools of French style, but with a marked desire to withstand the latter. He blames Du Vair for the strange and barbarous words he employs. He laughs also at the nicety of those who

were beginning to object to a number of common French words. One would not use the conjunction *Car*; against which folly Le Vayer wrote a separate treatise.* He defends the use of quotations in a different language, which some purists in French style had in horror. But this treatise seems not to contain much that is valuable, and it is very diffuse.

Legal speeches of Patru;

27. Two French writers may be reckoned worthy of a place in this chapter, who are, from the nature of their works, not generally known out of their own country, and whom I cannot refer with absolute propriety to this rather than to the ensuing period, except by a certain character and manner of writing, which belongs more to the antecedent than the later moiety of the seventeenth century. These were two lawyers, Patru and Le Maistre. The pleadings of Patru appear to me excellent in their particular line of forensic eloquence, addressed to intelligent and experienced judges. They greatly resemble what are called the private orations of Demosthenes, and those of Lysias and Isæus, especially, perhaps, the last. No ambitious ornament, no appeal to the emotions of the heart, no bold figures of rhetoric are permitted in the Attic severity of this style; or, if they ever occur, it is to surprise us as things rather uncommon in the place where they appear than in themselves. Patru does not even employ the exordium usual in speeches, but rushes instantaneously,

* This was Gomberville, in whose immense romance, Polexandre, it is said that this word only occurs three times; a discovery which does vast honour to the person who took the pains to make it.

though always perspicuously, into his statement of the case. In the eyes of many this is no eloquence at all, and it requires perhaps some taste for legal reasoning to enter fully into its merit. But the Greek orators are masters whom a modern lawyer need not blush to follow, and to follow, as Patru did, in their respect for the tribunal they addressed. They spoke to rather a numerous body of judges; but those were Athenians, and, as we have reason to believe, the best and most upright, the salt of that vicious city. Patru again spoke to the parliament of Paris, men too well versed in the ways of law and justice to be the dupes of tinkling sound. He is therefore plain, lucid, well-arranged, but not emphatic or impetuous; the subjects of his published speeches would not admit of such qualities; though Patru is said to have employed on some occasions the burning words of the highest oratory. His style has always been reckoned purely and rigidly French; but I have been led rather to praise what has struck me in the substance of his pleadings; which, whether read at this day in France or not, are, I may venture to say, worthy to be studied by lawyers, like those to which I have compared them, the strictly forensic portion of Greek oratory. In some speeches of Patru which are more generally praised, that on his own reception in the Academy, and one complimentary to Christina, it has seemed to me that he falls very short of his judicial style; the ornaments are common-place, and such as belong to the panegyrical department of oratory, in all ages less important and valuable than the other two.

It should be added, that Patru was not only one of the purest writers, but one of the best critics whom France possessed.*

and of Le Maistre.

28. The forensic speeches of Le Maistre are more eloquent, in a popular sense of the word, more ardent, more imaginative, than those of Patru; the one addresses the judges alone, the other has a view to the audience; the one seeks the success of his cause alone, the other that and his own glory together. The one will be more prized by the lovers of legal reasoning, the other by the majority of mankind. The one more resembles the orations of Demosthenes for his private clients, the others those of Cicero. Le Maistre is fervid and brilliant, he hurries us with him; in all his pleadings, warmth is his first characteristic, and a certain elegance is the second. In the power of statement, I do not perceive that he is inferior to Patru; both are excellent. Wherever great moral or social topics, or extensive views of history and human nature can be employed, Le Maistre has the advantage. Both are concise, relatively to the common verbosity of the bar; but Le Maistre has much more that might be retrenched; not that it is redundant in expression, but unnecessary in substance. This is owing to his ambitious display of general erudition; his quotations are too frequent and too ornamental, partly drawn from the ancients, but more from the fathers. Ambrose,

* Perrault says of Patru in his Hommes Illustres de France, vol. ii. p. 66. Ses plaidoyers servent *encore aujourd'hui* de modèle pour écrire correctement en notre langue. Yet they were not much above thirty years old—so much had the language changed, as to rules of writing, within that time.

CHAP. VII.

in fact, Jerome and Augustin, Chrysostom, Basil and Gregory were the models whom the writers of this age were accustomed to study; and hence they are often, and Le Maistre among the rest, too apt to declaim where they should prove, and to use arguments from analogy, rather striking to the common hearer, than likely to weigh much with a tribunal. He has less simplicity, less purity of taste than Patru; his animated language would, in our courts, be frequently effective with a jury, but would seem too indefinite and common-place to the judges; we should crowd to hear Le Maistre, we should be compelled to decide with Patru. They are both however very superior advocates, and do great honour to the French bar.

Improvement in English style.

29. A sensible improvement in the general style of English writers had come on before the expiration of the sixteenth century; the rude and rough phrases, sometimes requiring a glossary, which lie as spots of rust on the pages of Latimer, Grafton, Aylmer, or even Ascham, had been chiefly polished away; if we meet in Sydney, Hooker, or the prose of Spenser, with obsolete expressions or forms, we find none that are unintelligible, none that give us offence. But to this next period belong most of those whom we commonly reckon our old English writers; men often of such sterling worth for their sense, that we might read them with little regard to their language, yet, in some instances at least, possessing much that demands praise in this respect. They are generally nervous and effective, copious to redundancy in their command of words, apt to employ what seemed to them ornament with

much imagination rather than judicious taste, yet seldom degenerating into common-place and indefinite phraseology. They have however many defects; some of them, especially the most learned, are full of pedantry, and deform their pages by an excessive and preposterous mixture of Latinisms unknown before *; at other times we are disgusted by colloquial and even vulgar idioms or proverbs; nor is it uncommon to find these opposite blemishes not only in the same author, but in the same passages. Their periods, except in a very few, are ill-constructed and tediously prolonged; their ears (again with some exceptions) seem to have been insensible to the beauty of rhythmical prose; grace is commonly wanting, and their notion of the artifices of style, when they thought at all about them, was not congenial to our own language. This may be deemed a general description of the English writers under James and Charles; we shall now proceed to mention some of the most famous, and who may, in a certain degree, be deemed to modify this censure.

Earl of Essex.

30. I will begin with a passage of very considerable beauty, which is here out of its place, since it was written in the year 1598. It is found in the Apology for the Earl of Essex, published among the works of Lord Bacon, and passing, I suppose, commonly for his. It seems nevertheless, in my judgment, far more probably genuine. We

* In Pratt's edition of Bishop Hall's works, we have a glossary of obsolete or unusual words employed by him. They amount to more than 1100, the greater part being of Latin or Greek origin; some are Gallicisms.

have nowhere in our early writers a flow of words so easy and graceful, a structure so harmonious, a series of antitheses so spirited without affectation, an absence of quaintness, pedantry, and vulgarity so truly gentleman-like, a paragraph so worthy of the most brilliant man of his age. This could not have come from Bacon, who never divested himself of a certain didactic formality, even if he could have counterfeited that chivalrous generosity which it was not in his nature to feel. It is the language of a soldier's heart, with the unstudied grace of a noble courtier.*

* "A word for my friendship with the chief men of action, and favour generally to the men of war; and then I come to their main objection, which is my crossing of the treaty in hand. For most of them that are accounted the chief men of action, I do confess, I do entirely love them. They have been my companions both abroad and at home; some of them began the wars with me, most have had place under me, and many have had me a witness of their rising from captains, lieutenants, and private men to those charges, which since by their virtue they have obtained. Now that I have tried them, I would chuse them for friends, if I had them not; before I had tried them, God by his providence chose them for me. I love them for mine own sake; for I find sweetness in their conversation, strong assistance in their employments with me, and happiness in their friendship. I love them for their virtues' sake, and for their greatness of mind; (for little minds, though never so full of virtue, can be but a little virtuous;) and for their great understanding; for to understand little things or things not of use, is little better than to understand nothing at all. I love them for their affections; for self-loving men love ease, pleasure and profit; but they that love pains, danger and fame show that they love public profit more than themselves. I love them for my country's sake; for they are England's best armour of defence and weapons of offence. If we may have peace, they have purchased it; if we must have war, they must manage it. Yet while we are doubtful and in treaty we must value ourselves by what may be done, and the enemy will value us by what hath been done by our chief men of action.

"That generally I am affected to the men of war, it should not seem strange to any reasonable man. Every man doth love them of his own profession. The grave judges favour the students of the law; the reverend bishops the labourers in the ministry; and I (since her Majesty hath yearly used my service in her late actions) must reckon myself in the number of her men of war. Before action providence makes me cherish them for what they can do; in action ne-

Knolles's History of the Turks.

31. Knolles, already known by a spirited translation of Bodin's Commonwealth, published in 1610 a copious History of the Turks, bringing down his narrative to the most recent times. Johnson in a paper of the Rambler has given him the superiority over all English historians. "He has displayed all the excellencies that narration can admit. His style, though somewhat obscured by time, and vitiated by false wit, is pure, nervous, elevated and clear. . . . Nothing could have sunk this author into obscurity but the remoteness and barbarity of the people whose story he relates. It seldom happens that all circumstances concur to happiness or fame. The nation which produced this great historian has the grief of seeing his genius employed upon a foreign and uninteresting subject; and that writer who might have secured perpetuity to his name by a history of his own country, has exposed himself to the danger of oblivion by recounting enterprizes and revolutions of which none desire to be informed."* The subject however appeared to Knolles, and I know not how we can say erroneously, one of the most splendid he could have selected. It was the rise and growth of a mighty nation, second only to Rome in the constancy of success, and in the magnitude of empire; a nation fierce and terrible, the present scourge of half Christendom, and though from our remoteness not very formidable to ourselves, still one of which

cessity makes me value them for the service they do; and after action experience and thankfulness makes me love them for the service they have done."

* Rambler, No. 122.

CHAP. VII.

not the bookish man in his closet or the statesman in council had alone heard, but the smith at his anvil, and the husbandman at his plough. A long decrepitude of the Turkish empire on one hand, and our frequent alliance with it on the other, have obliterated the apprehensions and interests of every kind which were awakened throughout Europe by its youthful fury and its mature strength. The subject was also new in England, yet rich in materials; various, in comparison with ordinary history, though not perhaps so fertile of philosophical observation as some others, and furnishing many occasions for the peculiar talents of Knolles. These were displayed, not in depth of thought, or copiousness of collateral erudition, but in a style and in a power of narration which Johnson has not too highly extolled. His descriptions are vivid and animated; circumstantial, but not to feebleness; his characters are drawn with a strong pencil. It is indeed difficult to estimate the merits of an historian very accurately without having before our eyes his original sources; he may probably have translated much that we admire, and he had shown that he knew how to translate. In the style of Knolles there is sometimes, as Johnson has hinted, a slight excess of desire to make every phrase effective; but he is exempt from the usual blemishes of his age; and his command of the language is so extensive, that we should not err in placing him among the first of our elder writers. Comparing, as a specimen of Knolles's manner, his description of the execution of Mustapha, son of Solyman, with that given by Robertson, where

the latter historian has been as circumstantial as his limits would permit, we shall perceive that the former paints better his story, and deepens better its interest.*

CHAP. VII.

Raleigh's History of the World.

32. Raleigh's History of the World is a proof of the respect for laborious learning that had long distinguished Europe. We should expect from the prison-hours of a soldier, a courtier, a busy intriguer in state affairs, a poet and man of genius, something well worth our notice; but hardly a prolix history of the ancient world, hardly disquisitions on the site of Paradise and the travels of Cain. These are probably translated with little alteration from some of the learned writings of the Continent; they are by much the least valuable portion of Raleigh's work. The Greek and Roman story is told more fully and exactly than by any earlier English author, and with a plain eloquence, which has given this book a classical reputation in our language, though from its length, and the want of that critical sifting of facts which we now justly demand, it is not greatly read. Raleigh has intermingled political reflections, and illustrated his history by episodes from modern times, which perhaps are now the most interesting passages. It descends only to the second Macedonian war; the continuation might have been more generally valuable; but either the death of Prince Henry, as Raleigh himself tells us, or the new schemes of ambition which unfortunately opened upon his eyes, prevented the execution of

* Knolles, p. 515. Robertson, book xi.

CHAP. VII.

the large plan he had formed. There is little now obsolete in the words of Raleigh, nor, to any great degree, in his turn of phrase; the periods, when pains have been taken with them, show that artificial structure which we find in Sydney and Hooker; he is less pedantic than most of his contemporaries, seldom low, never affected.*

Daniel's History of England.

33. Daniel's History of England from the Conquest to the Reign of Edward III., published in 1618, is deserving of some attention on account of its language. It is written with a freedom from all stiffness, and a purity of style which hardly any other work of so early a date exhibits. These qualities are indeed so remarkable that it would require a good deal of critical observation to distinguish it even from writings of the reign of Anne; and where it differs from them, (I speak only of the secondary class of works, which have not much individuality of manner,) it is by a more select idiom, and by an absence of the Gallicism

* Raleigh's History was so little known, that Warburton, in the preface to his Julian, took from it a remarkable passage without acknowledgment; and Dr. Parr, though a man of very extensive reading, extolled it as Warburton's, not knowing, what he afterwards discovered, the original source. The passage is as follows in Raleigh, Warburton of course having altered some of the expressions. "We have left it (the Roman empire) flourishing in the middle of the field, having rooted up or cut down all that kept it from the eyes and admiration of the world. But after some continuance, it shall begin to lose the beauty it had; the storms of ambition shall beat her great boughs and branches one against another; her leaves shall fall off, her limbs wither, and a rabble of barbarous nations enter the field and cut her down." Raleigh's History, ad finem.

Notwithstanding the praise that has been bestowed on this sentence, it is open to some censure; the simile and subject are too much confounded; a rabble of barbarous nations might be required to subvert the Roman empire, but make an odd figure in cutting down a tree. The rhythm and spirit indeed are admirable.

or vulgarity which are often found in that age. It is true that the merits of Daniel are chiefly negative; he is never pedantic, or antithetical, or low, as his contemporaries were apt to be; but his periods are ill constructed, he has little vigour or elegance; and it is only by observing how much pains he must have taken to reject phrases which were growing obsolete, that we give him credit for having done more than follow the common stream of easy writing. A slight tinge of archaism, and a certain majesty of expression, relatively to colloquial usage, were thought by Bacon and Raleigh congenial to an elevated style; but Daniel, a gentleman of the king's household, wrote as the court spoke, and his facility would be pleasing if his sentences had a less negligent structure. As an historian, he has recourse only to common authorities; but his narration is fluent and perspicuous, with a regular vein of good sense, more the characteristic of his mind, both in verse and prose, than any commanding vigour.

34. The style of Bacon has an idiosyncracy which we might expect from his genius. It can rarely indeed happen, and only in men of secondary talents, that the language they use is not, by its very choice and collocation, as well as its meaning, the representative of an individuality that distinguishes their turn of thought. Bacon is elaborate, sententious, often witty, often metaphorical; nothing could be spared; his analogies are generally striking and novel; his style is clear, precise, forcible; yet there is some degree of stiffness about it, and in mere language he is inferior **Bacon.**

CHAP. VII. to Raleigh. The History of Henry VII., admirable as many passages are, seems to be written rather too ambitiously, and with too great an absence of simplicity.

Milton. 35. The polemical writings of Milton, which chiefly fall within this period, contain several bursts of his splendid imagination and grandeur of soul. They are however much inferior to the Areopagitica, or Plea for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing. Many passages in this famous tract are admirably eloquent; an intense love of liberty and truth glows through it, the majestic soul of Milton breathes such high thoughts as had not been uttered before; yet even here he frequently sinks in a single instant, as is usual with our old writers, from his highest flights to the ground; his intermixture of familiar with learned phraseology is unpleasing, his structure is affectedly elaborate, and he seldom reaches any harmony. If he turns to invective, as sometimes in this treatise, and more in his Apology for Smectymnuus, it is mere ribaldrous vulgarity blended with pedantry; his wit is always poor and without ease. An absence of idiomatic grace, and an use of harsh inversions violating the rules of the language, distinguish, in general, the writings of Milton, and require in order to compensate them such high beauties as will sometimes occur.

Clarendon. 36. The History of Clarendon may be considered as belonging rather to this than to the second period of the century, both by the probable date of composition and by the nature of its style. He is excellent in every thing that he has per-

formed with care; his characters are beautifully delineated, his sentiments have often a noble gravity which the length of his periods, far too great in itself, seems to befit; but in the general course of his narration he is negligent of grammar and perspicuity, with little choice of words, and therefore sometimes idiomatic without ease or elegance. The official papers on the royal side, which are generally attributed to him, are written in a masculine and majestic tone, far superior to those of the parliament. The latter had however a writer who did them honour: May's History of the Parliament is a good model of genuine English; he is plain, terse and vigorous, never slovenly, though with few remarkable passages, and is, in style as well as substance, a kind of contrast to Clarendon.

The Icon Basilice.

37. The famous Icon Basilice, ascribed to Charles I., may deserve a place in literary history. If we could trust its panegyrists, few books in our language have done it more credit by dignity of sentiment and beauty of style. It can hardly be necessary for me to express my unhesitating conviction that it was solely written by Bishop Gauden, who after the Restoration unequivocally claimed it as his own. The folly and impudence of such a claim, if it could not be substantiated, are not to be presumed as to any man of good understanding, fair character and high station, without stronger evidence than has been alleged on the other side; especially when we find that those who had the best means of inquiry, at a time when it seems impossible that the falsehood of Gauden's assertion

CHAP. VII.

should not have been demonstrated, if it were false, acquiesced in his pretensions. We have very little to place against this, except secondary testimony, vague, for the most part, in itself, and collected by those whose veracity has not been put to the test like that of Gauden.* The style also of the Icon Basilice has been identified by Mr. Todd with that of Gauden by the use of several phrases so peculiar that we can hardly conceive them to have suggested themselves to more than one person. It is nevertheless superior to his acknowledged writings. A strain of majestic melancholy is well kept up; but the personated sovereign is rather too theatrical for real nature, the language is too rhetorical and amplified, the periods too artificially elaborated. None but scholars and practised writers employ such a stile as this.

Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy.

38. Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy belongs, by its systematic divisions and its accumulated quotations, to the class of mere erudition; it seems at first sight like those tedious Latin folios, into which scholars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries threw the materials of their Adversaria,

* There is only one claimant, in a proper sense, for the Icon Basilice, which is Gauden himself; the king neither appears by himself or representative. And, though we may find several instances of plagiarism in literary history (one of the grossest being the publication by a Spanish friar, under another title, of a book already in print with the name of Hyperius of Marpurg, its real author), yet I cannot call to mind any, where a man known to the world has asserted in terms his own authorship of a book not written by himself, but universally ascribed to another, and which had never been in his possession. A story is told, and I believe truly, that a young man assumed the credit of Mackenzie's Man of Feeling, while it was still anonymous. But this is widely different from the case of the Icon Basilice. We have had an interminable discussion as to the Letters of Junius. But no one has ever claimed this derelict property to himself, or told the world, I am Junius.

or common-place books, painfully selected and arranged by the labour of many years. But writing fortunately in English, and in a style not by any means devoid of point and terseness, with much good sense and observation of men as well as of books, and having also the skill of chusing his quotations for their rareness, oddity and amusing character, without losing sight of their pertinence to the subject, he has produced a work of which, as is well known, Johnson said, that it was the only one which had ever caused him to leave his bed earlier than he had intended. Johnson, who seems to have had some turn for the singularities of learning which fill the Anatomy of Melancholy, may perhaps have raised the credit of Burton higher than his desert. He is clogged by excess of reading, like others of his age, and we may peruse entire chapters without finding more than a few lines that belong to himself. This becomes a wearisome style, and, for myself, I have not found much pleasure in glancing over the Anatomy of Melancholy. It may be added that he has been a collector of stories far more strange than true, from those records of figments, the old medical writers of the sixteenth century, and other equally deceitful sources. Burton lived at Oxford, and his volumes are apparently a great sweeping of miscellaneous literature from the Bodleian library.

Earle's Characters.

39. John Earle, after the Restoration bishop of Worcester, and then of Salisbury, is author of "Microcosmographia, or a Piece of the Worlde discovered in Essays and Characters" published ano-

CHAP. VII.

nymously in 1628. In some of these short characters, Earle is worthy of comparison with La Bruyère; in others, perhaps the greater part, he has contented himself with pictures of ordinary manners, such as the varieties of occupation, rather than of intrinsic character, supply. In all, however, we find an acute observation and a happy humour of expression. The chapter entitled the Sceptic is best known; it is witty, but an insult throughout on the honest searcher after truth, which could have come only from one that was content to take up his own opinions for ease or profit. Earle is always gay and quick to catch the ridiculous, especially that of exterior appearances; his style is short, describing well with a few words, but with much of the affected quaintness of that age. It is one of those books which give us a picturesque idea of the manners of our fathers at a period now become remote, and for this reason it would deserve to be read.

Overbury's Characters.

40. But the Microcosmography is not an original work in its plan or mode of execution; it is a close imitation of the Characters of Sir Thomas Overbury. They both belong to the favourite style of apophthegm, in which every sentence is a point or a witticism. Yet the entire character so delineated produces a certain effect; it is a Dutch picture, a Gerard Dow, somewhat too elaborate. Earle has more natural humour than Overbury, and hits his mark more neatly; the other is more satirical, but often abusive and vulgar. The "Fair and Happy Milkmaid," often quoted, is the best of his characters. The wit is often trivial

and flat; the sentiments have nothing in them general or worthy of much resemblance; praise is only due to the graphic skill in delineating character. Earle is as clearly the better, as Overbury is the more original writer.

Jonson's Discoveries.

41. A book by Ben Jonson, intitled "Timber, or Discoveries made upon Men and Matter," is altogether miscellaneous, the greater part being general moral remarks, while another portion deserves notice as the only book of English criticism in the first part of the seventeenth century. The observations are unconnected, judicious, sometimes witty, frequently severe. The style is what was called pregnant, leaving much to be filled up by the reader's reflection. Good sense and a vigorous manner of grappling with every subject will generally be found in Jonson, but he does not reach any very profound criticism. His English Grammar is said by Gifford to have been destroyed in the conflagration of his study. What we have therefore under that name is, he thinks, to be considered as properly the materials of a more complete work that is lost. We have, as I apprehend, no earlier grammar upon so elaborate a plan; every rule is illustrated by examples, almost to redundance; but he is too copious on what is common to other languages, and perhaps not full enough as to our peculiar idiom. Nothing else deserving of the slightest notice can be added to this book of Jonson.

CHAP. VII.

SECT. II.

ON FICTION.

Cervantes — French Romances — Calprenede — Scuderi — Latin and English Works of Fiction.

Publication of Don Quixote.

42. THE first part of Don Quixote was published in 1605. We have no reason, I believe, to suppose that it was written long before. It became immediately popular; and the admiration of the world raised up envious competitors, one of whom, Avellenada, published a continuation in a strain of invective against the author. Cervantes, who cannot be imagined to have ever designed the leaving his romance in so unfinished a state, took time about the second part, which did not appear till 1615.

Its reputation.

43. Don Quixote is the only book in the Spanish language which can now be said to possess much of an European reputation. It has, however, enjoyed enough to compensate for the neglect of all the rest. It is to Europe in general what Ariosto is to Italy, and Shakspeare to England; the one book to which the slightest allusions may be made without affectation, but not missed without discredit. Numerous translations and countless editions of them, in every language, bespeak its adaptation to mankind; no critic has been paradoxical enough to withhold his admiration, no reader has ventured to confess a want of relish for

that in which the young and old, in every climate, have age after age taken delight. They have doubtless believed that they understood the author's meaning; and, in giving the reins to the gaiety that his fertile invention and comic humour inspired, never thought of any deeper meaning than he announces, or delayed their enjoyment for any metaphysical investigation of his plan.

New views of its design.

44. A new school of criticism, however, has of late years arisen in Germany, acute, ingenious, and sometimes eminently successful in philosophical, or, as they denominate it, æsthetic analysis of works of taste, but gliding too much into refinement and conjectural hypothesis, and with a tendency to mislead men of inferior capacities for this kind of investigation into mere paradox and absurdity. An instance is supplied, in my opinion, by some remarks of Bouterwek, still more explicitly developed by Sismondi, on the design of Cervantes in Don Quixote, and which have been repeated in other publications. According to these writers, the primary idea is that of a "man of elevated character, excited by heroic and enthusiastic feelings to the extravagant pitch of wishing to restore the age of chivalry; nor is it possible to form a more mistaken notion of this work than by considering it merely as a satire, intended by the author to ridicule the absurd passion for reading old romances."* "The fundamental idea of Don Quixote," says Sismondi, "is the eternal contrast between the spirit of poetry and that of prose. Men of an elevated soul propose to themselves as

* Bouterwek, p. 334.

CHAP. VII.

the object of life to be the defenders of the weak, the support of the oppressed, the champions of justice and innocence. Like Don Quixote they find on every side the image of the virtues they worship; they believe that disinterestedness, nobleness, courage, in short, knight errantry, are still prevalent; and with no calculation of their own powers, they expose themselves for an ungrateful world, they offer themselves as a sacrifice to the laws and rules of an imaginary state of society."*

45. If this were a true representation of the scheme of Don Quixote, we cannot wonder that some persons should, as M. Sismondi tells us they do, consider it as the most melancholy book that has ever been written. They consider it also, no doubt, one of the most immoral, as chilling and pernicious in its influence on the social converse of mankind, as the Prince of Machiavel is on their political intercourse. "Cervantes," he proceeds, "has shown us in some measure the vanity of greatness of soul and the delusion of heroism. He has drawn in Don Quixote a perfect man (un homme accompli), who is nevertheless the constant object of ridicule. Brave beyond the fabled knights he imitates, disinterested, honourable, generous, the most faithful and respectful of lovers, the best of masters, the most accomplished and well educated of gentlemen, all his enterprizes end in discomfiture to himself, and in mischief to others." M. Sismondi descants upon the perfections of the knight of La Mancha with a gravity which is not quite easy for his readers to preserve.

* Littérature du Midi, vol. iii. p. 339.

Probably erroneous.

46. It might be answered by a phlegmatic observer, that a mere enthusiasm for doing good, if excited by vanity, and not accompanied by common sense, will seldom be very serviceable to ourselves or to others; that men who in their heroism and care for the oppressed, would throw open the cages of lions, and set galley-slaves at liberty, not forgetting to break the limbs of harmless persons whom they mistake for wrong-doers, are a class of whom Don Quixote is the real type; and that the world being much the worse for such heroes, it might not be immoral, notwithstanding their benevolent enthusiasm, to put them out of countenance by a little ridicule. This however is not, as I conceive, the primary aim of Cervantes; nor do I think that the exhibition of one great truth, as the predominant, but concealed, moral of a long work, is in the spirit of his age. He possessed a very thoughtful mind and a profound knowledge of humanity; yet the generalization which the hypothesis of Bouterwek and Sismondi requires for the leading conception of Don Quixote, besides its being a little inconsistent with the valorous and romantic character of its author, belongs to a more advanced period of philosophy than his own. It will at all events, I presume, be admitted that we can not reason about Don Quixote except from the book, and I think it may be shown in a few words that these ingenious writers have been chiefly misled by some want of consistency which circumstances produced in the author's delineation of his hero.

CHAP. VII.

Difference between the two parts.

47. In the first chapter of this romance, Cervantes, with a few strokes of a great master, sets before us the pauper gentleman, an early riser and keen sportsman, who "when he was idle, which was most part of the year," gave himself up to reading books of chivalry till he lost his wits. The events that follow are in every one's recollection; his lunacy consists no doubt only in one idea; but this is so absorbing that it perverts the evidence of his senses, and predominates in all his language. It is to be observed, therefore, in relation to the nobleness of soul ascribed to Don Quixote, that every sentiment he utters is borrowed with a punctilious rigour from the romances of his library; he resorts to them on every occasion for precedents; if he is intrepidly brave, it is because his madness and vanity have made him believe himself unconquerable; if he bestows kingdoms, it is because Amadis would have done the same; if he is honourable, courteous, a redresser of wrongs, it is in pursuance of these prototypes, from whom, except that he seems rather more scrupulous in chastity, it is his only boast not to diverge. Those who talk of the exalted character of Don Quixote seem really to forget that, on these subjects, he has no character at all; he is the echo of romance; and to praise him is merely to say, that the tone of chivalry, which these productions studied to keep up, and, in the hands of inferior artists, foolishly exaggerated, was full of moral dignity, and has, in a subdued degree of force, modelled the character of a man of honour in the present day. But throughout the first two volumes of Don

Quixote, though in a few unimportant passages he talks rationally, I cannot find more than two in which he displays any other knowledge or strength of mind than the original delineation of the character would lead us to expect.

48. The case is much altered in the last two volumes. Cervantes had acquired an immense popularity, and perceived the opportunity, of which he had already availed himself, that this romance gave for displaying his own mind. He had become attached to a hero who had made him illustrious, and suffered himself to lose sight of the clear outline he had once traced for Quixote's personality. Hence we find in all this second part that, although the lunacy as to knights errant remains unabated, he is, on all other subjects, not only rational in the low sense of the word, but clear, acute, profound, sarcastic, cool-headed. His philosophy is elevated but not enthusiastic, his imagination is poetical, but it is restrained by strong sense. There are, in fact, two Don Quixotes; one, whom Cervantes first designed to draw, the foolish gentleman of La Mancha, whose foolishness had made him frantic; the other a highly gifted, accomplished model of the best chivalry, trained in all the court, the camp, or the college could impart, but scathed in one portion of his mind by an inexplicable visitation of monomania. One is inclined to ask why this Don Quixote, who is Cervantes, should have been more likely to lose his intellects by reading romances than Cervantes himself. As a matter of bodily disease, such an event is doubtless possible; but nothing can be conceived more

CHAP. VII.

improper for fiction, nothing more incapable of affording a moral lesson than the insanity which arises wholly from disease. Insanity is, in no point of view, a theme for ridicule; and this is an inherent fault of the romance (for those who have imagined that Cervantes has not rendered Quixote ridiculous have a strange notion of the word); but the thoughtlessness of mankind, rather than their insensibility, for they do not connect madness with misery, furnishes some apology for the first two volumes. In proportion as we perceive below the veil of mental delusion a noble intellect, we feel a painful sympathy with its humiliation; the character becomes more complicated and interesting, but has less truth and naturalness; an objection which might also be made, comparatively speaking, to the incidents in the latter volumes, wherein I do not find the admirable probability that reigns through the former. But this contrast of wisdom and virtue with insanity in the same subject would have been repulsive in the primary delineation; as I think any one may judge by supposing that Cervantes had, in the first chapter, drawn such a picture of Quixote as Bouterwek and Sismondi have drawn for him.

49. I must therefore venture to think as, I believe, the world has generally thought for two centuries, that Cervantes had no more profound aim than he proposes to the reader. If the fashion of reading bad romances of chivalry perverted the taste of his contemporaries, and rendered their language ridiculous, it was natural that a zealous lover of good literature should expose this folly

to the world by exaggerating its effects on a fictitious personage. It has been said by some modern writer, though I cannot remember by whom, that there was a *prose side* in the mind of Cervantes. There was indeed a side of calm strong sense, which some take for unpoetical. He thought the tone of those romances extravagant. It might naturally occur how absurd any one must appear who should attempt to realize in actual life the adventures of Amadis. Already a novelist, he perceived the opportunities this idea suggested. It was a necessary consequence that the hero must be represented as literally insane, since his conduct would have been extravagant beyond the probability of fiction on any other hypothesis; and from this happy conception germinated in a very prolific mind the whole history of Don Quixote. Its simplicity is perfect; no limit could be found save the author's discretion, or sense that he had drawn sufficiently on his imagination; but the death of Quixote, which Cervantes has been said to have determined upon, lest some one else should a second time presume to continue the story, is in fact the only possible termination that could be given, after he had elevated the character to that pitch of mental dignity which we find in the last two volumes.

Excellence of this romance.

50. Few books of moral philosophy display as deep an insight into the mechanism of the mind as Don Quixote. And when we look also at the fertility of invention, the general probability of the events, and the great simplicity of the story, wherein no artifices are practised to create sus-

CHAP. VII.

pense, or complicate the action, we shall think Cervantes fully deserving of the glory that attends this monument of his genius. It is not merely that he is superior to all his predecessors and contemporaries. This, though it might account for the European fame of his romance, would be an inadequate testimony to its desert. Cervantes stands on an eminence below which we must place the best of his successors. We have only to compare him with Le Sage or Fielding, to judge of his vast superiority. To Scott indeed he must yield in the variety of his power; but in the line of comic romance, we should hardly think Scott his equal.

Minor novels of Cervantes.

51. The moral novels of Cervantes, as he calls them (Novellas Exemplares), are written, I believe, in a good style, but too short, and constructed with too little artifice to rivet our interest. Their simplicity and truth, as in many of the old novels, have a certain charm; but in the present age, our sense of satiety in works of fiction cannot be overcome but by excellence.

Other novels — Spanish.

Of the Spanish comic romances, in the *picaresque* style, several remain: Justina was the most famous. One that does not strictly belong to this lower class is the Marcos de Obregon of Espinel. This is supposed to have suggested much to Le Sage in Gil Blas; in fact, the first story we meet with is that of Mergellina the physician's wife. The style, though not dull, wants the grace and neatness of Le Sage. This is esteemed one of the best novels that Spain has produced.

And Italian.

Italy was no longer the seat of this literature. A romance of chivalry by Marini (not the poet of that name), intitled Il Caloandro (1640), was trans-

lated but indifferently into French by Scuderi, and has been praised by Salfi as full of imagination, with characters skilfully diversified, and an interesting well-conducted story. *

French romances — Astrée.

52. France in the sixteenth century, content with Amadis de Gaul and the numerous romances of the Spanish school, had contributed very little to that literature. But now she had native writers of both kinds, the pastoral and heroic, who completely superseded the models they had before them. Their earliest essay was the Astrée of D'Urfé. Of this pastoral romance the first volume was published in 1610; the second in 1620; three more came slowly forth, that the world might have due leisure to admire. It contains about 5500 pages. It would be almost as discreditable to have read such a book through at present, as it was to be ignorant of it in the ages of Louis XIII. Allusions, however, to real circumstances served in some measure to lessen the insipidity of a love-story, which seems to equal any in absurdity and want of interest. The style, and I can judge no farther, having read but a few pages, seems easy and not unpleasing; but the pastoral tone is insufferably puerile, and a monotonous solemnity makes us almost suspect that one source of its popularity was its gentle effect, when read in small portions before retiring to rest. It was nevertheless admired by men of erudition, like Camus and Huet, or even by men of the world like Rochefoucault. †

* Salfi, vol. xiv. p. 88.

† Dunlop's History of Fiction, vol. iii. p. 184. Biographie Universelle. Bouterwek, vol. v. p. 295.

CHAP. VII.

Heroic romances. Gomberville.

53. From the union of the old chivalrous romance with this newer style, the courtly pastoral, sprang another kind of fiction, the French heroic romance. Three nearly contemporary writers, Gomberville, Calprenède, Scuderi, supplied a number of voluminous stories, frequently historical in some of their names, but utterly destitute of truth in circumstances, characters and manners. Gomberville led the way in his Polexandre, first published in 1632, and reaching in later editions to about 6000 pages. "This," says a modern writer, "seems to have been the model of the works of Calprenède and Scuderi. This ponderous work may be regarded as a sort of intermediate production between the later compositions and the ancient fables of chivalry. It has indeed a close affinity to the heroic romance; but many of the exploits of the hero are as extravagant as those of a paladin or knight of the round table."* No romance in the language has so complex an intrigue, insomuch that it is followed with difficulty; and the author has in successive editions capriciously remodelled parts of his story, which is wholly of his own invention.†

Calprenède.

54. Calprenède, a poet of no contemptible powers of imagination, poured forth his stores of rapid invention in several romances more celebrated than that of Gomberville. The first, which is contained in ten octavo volumes, is the Cassandra. This appeared in 1642, and was followed by the Cleopatra, published according to the custom of romancers, in

* Dunlop, iii. 230. † Biog. Univ.

successive parts, the earliest in 1646. La Harpe thinks this unquestionably the best work of Calprenède; Bouterwek seems to prefer the Cassandra. Pharamond is not wholly his own; five out of twelve volumes belong to one De Vaumorière, a continuator.* Calprenède, like many others, had but a life-estate in the temple of fame, and more happy, perhaps, than greater men, lived out the whole favour of the world, which, having been largely showered on his head, strewed no memorials on his grave. It became, soon after his death, through the satire of Boileau and the influence of a new style in fiction, a matter of course to turn him into ridicule. It is impossible that his romances should be read again; but those who, for the purposes of general criticism, have gone back to these volumes find not a little to praise in his genius, and in some measure to explain his popularity. "Calprenède," says Bouterwek, "belonged to the extravagant party, which endeavoured to give a triumph to genius at the expense of taste, and by that very means played into the hands of the opposite party, which saw nothing so laudable as the observation of the rules which taste prescribed. We have only to become acquainted with any one of the prolix romances of Calprenède, such, for instance, as the Cassandra, to see clearly the spirit which animates the whole invention. We find there again the heroism of chivalry, the enthusiastic raptures of love, the struggle of duty with passion, the victory of magnanimity, sincerity and humanity,

* Dunlop, iii. 259.

CHAP. VII.

over force, fraud and barbarism, in the genuine characters and circumstances of romance. The events are skilfully interwoven, and a truly poetical keeping belongs to the whole, however extended it may be. The diction of Calprenède is a little monotonous, but not at all trivial, and seldom affected. It is like that of old romance, grave, circumstantial, somewhat in the chronicle style, but picturesque, agreeable, full of sensibility and simplicity. Many passages might, if versified, find a place in the most beautiful poem of this class." *

Scuderi.

55. The honours of this romantic literature have long been shared by the female sex. In the age of Richelieu and Mazarin, this was represented by Mademoiselle de Scuderi, a name very glorious for a season, but which unfortunately did not, like that of Calprenède, continue to be such during the whole lifetime of her who bore it. The old age of Mademoiselle de Scuderi was ignominiously treated by the pitiless Boileau; and reaching more than her ninetieth year, she almost survived her only offspring, those of her pen. In her youth she had been the associate of the Rambouillet circle, and caught perhaps in some measure from them what she gave back with interest, a tone of perpetual affectation and a pedantic gallantry, which could not withstand the first approach of ridicule. Her first romance was Ibrahim, published in 1635; but the more celebrated were the Grand Cyrus and the Clelie. Each of these two

* Bouterwek, vi. 230.

romances is in ten volumes.* The persons chiefly connected with the Hotel Rambouillet sat for their pictures, as Persians or Babylonians, in Cyrus. Julie d'Angennes herself bore the name of Artenice, by which she was afterwards distinguished among her friends; and it is a remarkable instance not only of the popularity of these romances, but of the respectful sentiment, which, from the elevation and purity no one can deny them to exhibit, was always associated in the gravest persons with their fictions, that a prelate of eminent taste and eloquence, Fléchier, in his funeral sermon on this lady, calls her "the incomparable Artenice."† Such an allusion would appear to us misplaced; but we may presume that it was not so thought. Scuderi's romances seem to have been remarkably the favourites of the clergy; Huet, Mascaron, Godeau, as much as Fléchier, were her ardent admirers. "I find," says the second of these, one of the chief ornaments of the French pulpit, in writing to Mademoiselle de Scuderi, "so much in your works calculated to reform the world, that in the sermons I am now preparing for the court, you will often be on my table by the side of St. Augustin and St. Bernard."‡ In the writings of this

* Biogr. Univ. Dunlop. Bouterwek.

† Sermons de Fléchier, ii. 325. (edit. 1690). But probably Bossuet would not have stooped to this allusion.

‡ Biogr. Univ. Mademoiselle de Scuderi was not gifted by nature with beauty, or, as this biographer more bluntly says, étoit d'un extrême laideur. She would probably have wished this to have been otherwise, but carried off the matter very well, as appears by her epigram on her own picture by Nanteuil

Nanteuil, en faisant mon image,
A de son art divin signalé le pouvoir;
Je hais mes yeux dans mon miroir,
Je les aime dans son ouvrage.

CHAP. VII.

lady we see the last footstep of the old chivalrous romance. She, like Calprenède, had derived from this source the predominant characteristics of her personages, an exalted generosity, a disdain of all selfish considerations, a courage which attempts impossibilities and is rewarded by achieving them, a love outrageously hyperbolical in pretence, yet intrinsically without passion, all in short that Cervantes has bestowed on Don Quixote. Love, however, or its counterfeit, gallantry, plays a still more leading part in the French romance than in its Castilian prototype; the feats of heroes, though not less wonderful, are less prominent on the canvass, and a metaphysical pedantry replaces the pompous metaphors in which the knight of sorrowful countenance had taken so much delight. The approbation of many persons, far better judges than Don Quixote, makes it impossible to doubt that the romances of Calprenède and Scuderi were better than his library. But as this is the least possible praise, it will certainly not tempt any one away from the rich and varied repast of fiction which the last and present century have spread before him. Mademoiselle de Scuderi has perverted history still more than Calprenède, and changed her Romans into languishing Parisians. It is not to be forgotten that the taste of her party, though it did not, properly speaking, infect Corneille, compelled him to weaken some of his tragedies. And this must be the justification of Boileau's cutting ridicule upon this truly estimable woman. She had certainly kept up a tone of severe and high m[illegible]ality, with which the aristocracy of Paris

could ill dispense; but it was one not difficult to feign, and there might be Tartuffes of sentiment as well as of religion. Whatever is false in taste is apt to be allied to what is insincere in character.

Argenis of Barclay.

56. The Argenis of Barclay, a son of the defender of royal authority against republican theories, is a Latin romance, superior to those which the Spanish or French language could boast. It has indeed always been reckoned among political allegories. That the state of France in the last years of Henry III. is partially shadowed in it, can admit of no doubt; several characters are faintly veiled either by anagram or Greek translation of their names; but whether to avoid the insipidity of servile allegory, or to excite the reader by perplexity, Barclay has mingled so much of mere fiction with his story, that no attempts at a regular key to the whole work can be successful, nor in fact does the fable of this romance run in any parallel stream with real events. His object seems in great measure to have been the discussion of political questions in feigned dialogue. But though in these we find no want of acuteness or good sense, they have not at present much novelty in our eyes; and though the style is really pleasing, or, as some have judged, excellent *, and the incidents not ill contrived, it

* Coleridge has pronounced an ardent, and rather excessive, eulogy on the language of the Argenis, preferring it to that of Livy or Tacitus. Coleridge's Remains, vol. i. p. 257. I cannot by any means go this length; it has struck me that the Latinity is more that of Petronius Arbiter, but I am not well enough acquainted with this writer to speak confidently. The same observation seems applicable to the Euphormio.

CHAP. VII.

might be hard to go entirely through a Latin romance of 700 pages, unless indeed we had no alternative given but the perusal of the similar works in Spanish or French. The Argenis was published at Rome in 1622; some of the personages introduced by Barclay are his own contemporaries; a proof that he did not intend a strictly historical allegory of the events of the last age. The Euphormio of the same author resembles in some degree the Argenis, but, with less of story and character, has a more direct reference to European politics. It contains much political disquisition, and one whole book is employed in a description of the manners and laws of different countries with no disguise of names.

His Euphormio.

Campanella's City of the Sun.

57. Campanella gave a loose to his fanciful humour in a fiction, entitled the City of the Sun, published at Frankfort in 1623, in imitation perhaps of the Utopia. The City of the Sun is supposed to stand upon a mountain situated in Ceylon, under the equator. A community of goods and women is established in this republic; the principal magistrate of which is styled Sun, and is elected after a strict examination in all kinds of science. Campanella has brought in so much of his own philosophical system, that we may presume that to have been the object of this romance. The Solars, he tells us, abstained at first from flesh, because they thought it cruel to kill animals. "But afterwards considering that it would be equally cruel to kill plants, which are not less endowed with sensation, so that they must perish by famine, they understood that ignoble things were created for the use of nobler things, and now eat all

things without scruple." Another Latin romance had some celebrity in its day, the Monarchia Solipsorum, a satire on the Jesuits in the fictitious name of Lucius Cornelius Europeus. It has been ascribed to more than one person; the probable author is one Scotti, who had himself belonged to the order.* This book did not seem to me in the least interesting; if it is so in any degree, it must be not as mere fiction, but as a revelation of secrets.

Few books of fiction in England.

58. It is not so much an extraordinary as an unfortunate deficiency in our own literary annals, that England should have been destitute of the comic romance, or that derived from real life, to a late period; since in fact we may say the same, as has been seen, of France. The *picaresque* novels of Spain were thought well worthy of translation; but it occurred to no one, or no one had the gift of genius, to shift the scene, and imitate their delineation of native manners. Of how much value would have been a genuine English novel, the mirror of actual life in the various ranks of society, written under Elizabeth or under the Stuarts! We should have seen, if the execution had not been very coarse, and the delineation absolutely confined to low characters, the social habits of our forefathers better than by all our other sources of that knowledge, the plays, the letters, the traditions and anecdotes, the pictures or buildings of the time. Notwithstanding the interest all profess to

* Biogr. Univ. arts. Scotti and Inchoffer. Niceron, vols. xxxv. and xxxix.

take in the history of manners, our notions of them are generally meagre and imperfect; and hence modern works of fiction are but crude and inaccurate designs when they endeavour to represent the living England of two centuries since. Even Scott, who had a fine instinctive perception of truth and nature, and who had read much, does not appear to have seized the genuine tone of conversation, and to have been a little misled by the style of Shakspeare. This is rather elaborate and removed from vulgar use by a sort of archaism in phrase and a pointed turn in the dialogue, adapted to theatrical utterance, but wanting the ease of ordinary speech.

Mundus Alter et Idem of Hall.

59. I can only produce two books by English authors in this first part of the seventeenth century which fall properly under the class of novels or romances; and of these one is written in Latin. This is the Mundus Alter et Idem of Bishop Hall, an imitation of the latter and weaker volumes of Rabelais. A country in Terra Australis is divided into four regions, Crapulia, Viraginia, Moronea, and Lavernia. Maps of the whole land and of particular regions are given; and the nature of the satire, not much of which has any especial reference to England, may easily be collected. It is not a very successful effort.

Godwin's Journey to the Moon.

60. Another prelate, or one who became such, Francis Godwin, was the author of a much more curious story. It is called the Man in the Moon, and relates the journey of one Domingo Gonsalez to that planet. This was written by Godwin, according to Anthony Wood, while he was a student

at Oxford.* By some internal proofs, it must have been later than 1599, and before the death of Elizabeth in 1603. But it was not published till 1638. It was translated into French, and became the model of Cyrano de Bergerac, as he was of Swift. Godwin himself had no prototype, as far as I know, but Lucian. He resembles those writers in the natural and veracious tone of his lyes. The fiction is rather ingenious and amusing throughout; but the most remarkable part is the happy conjectures, if we must say no more, of his philosophy. Not only does the writer declare positively for the Copernican system, which was uncommon at that time, but he has surprisingly understood the principle of gravitation, it being distinctly supposed that the earth's attraction diminishes with the distance. Nor is the following passage less curious. "I must let you understand that the globe of the moon is not altogether destitute of an attractive power; but it is far weaker than that of the earth; as if a man do but spring upwards with all his force, as dancers do when they show their activity by capering, he shall be able to mount fifty or sixty feet high, and then he is quite beyond all attraction of the moon." By this device Gonzalez returns from his sojourn in the latter, though it required a more complex device to bring him thither. "The moon," he observes, "is covered with a sea, except the parts

* Athenæ Oxonienses, vol. ii. col. 558. It is remarkable that Mr. Dunlop has been ignorant of Godwin's claim to this work, and takes Dominic Gonzalez for the real author. Hist. of Fiction, iii. 394.

CHAP. VII.

which seem somewhat darker to us, and are dry land." A contrary hypothesis came afterwards to prevail; but we must not expect every thing from our ingenious young student.

Howell's Dodona's Grove.

61. Though I can mention nothing else in English which comes exactly within our notions of a romance, we may advert to the Dodona's Grove of James Howell. This is a strange allegory, without any ingenuity in maintaining the analogy between the outer and inner story, which alone can give a reader any pleasure in allegorical writing. The subject is the state of Europe, especially of England, about 1640, under the guise of animated trees in a forest. The style is like the following. "The next morning the royal olive sent some prime elms to attend prince Rocolino in quality of officers of state; and a little after he was brought to the royal palace in the same state Elaiana's kings use to be attended the day of their coronation." The contrivance is all along so clumsy and unintelligible, the invention so poor and absurd, the story, if story there be, so dull an echo of well-known events, that it is impossible to reckon Dodona's Grove anything but an entire failure. Howell has no wit, but he has abundance of conceits, flat and commonplace enough. With all this he was a man of some sense and observation. His letters are entertaining, but they scarcely deserve consideration in this volume.

Adventures of Baron Fæneste.

62. It is very possible that some small works belonging to this extensive class have been omitted, which my readers, or myself on second consideration, might think not unworthy of notice. It is

also one so miscellaneous that we might fairly doubt as to some which have a certain claim to be admitted into it. Such are the Adventures of the Baron de Fæneste, by the famous Agrippa d'Aubigné (whose autobiography, by the way, has at least the liveliness of fiction); a singular book written in dialogue, where an imaginary Gascon baron recounts his tales of the camp and the court. He is made to speak a patois not quite easy for us to understand, and not perhaps worth the while; but it seems to contain much that illustrates the state of France about the beginning of the seventeenth century. Much in this book is satirical; and the satire falls on the Catholics, whom Fæneste, a mere foolish gentleman of Gascony, is made to defend against an acute Hugonot.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

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